

SOVIET STRATEGY for NUCLEAR WAR

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Foreword by Eugene V. Rostow

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Contents

Editor's Foreword	vii
Foreword	ix
I	Introduction 1
II	The Soviet View of Nuclear War—Nuclear Warfighting 7
III	Soviet Warfighting Objectives—Conditions of Victory 14
IV	Phases of the War in Soviet Military Thought 34
V	Preparing for War—Strategic Planning 54
VI	Strategic Force Targeting and Employment Strategy 72
VII	The Strategic Decision 89
	Notes 109
	Bibliography 123
	Index 135

Editor's Foreword

THE IMMENSE GROWTH in Soviet military capabilities since the mid-1960s has been consistently underestimated by national intelligence agencies estimates, according to the U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. Perhaps one reason for underestimating these capabilities and misanalyzing intentions of America's most dangerous opponent involves inadequate appreciation of the thinking about war that takes place in the USSR. This problem is clearly reflected in statements by the U.S. secretary of defense in which he explicitly wonders whether the Soviets are "less well intentioned than we would wish them to be."

The answer to this question should affect the emerging debate on a possible new Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT II) as well as how we, our allies, and even the Third World countries assess the adequacy of the American strategic nuclear deterrent. Whether the USSR is more or less well intentioned should also affect United States and NATO decisions on weapon systems research, development, and acquisition that are being made now and will shape our national security posture for many years to come.

Increasing numbers of highly respected and informed individuals publicly have begun to challenge the direction in which we are heading. Since the issues of how and why the Soviets are pursuing the course they have chosen are crucial, when this study on USSR military strategy was brought to the attention of the Hoover Institution we quickly recognized its importance and the need to make it available to the public as rapidly as possible. One reason why this analysis bears the closest scrutiny is that it is *not*

based on that newsstand literature, which the Soviets know full well is read in the West and, more importantly, is the major (and hence most influential) source available to the public, news media, universities, and congressional leaders. The authors have scrutinized USSR publications whose circulation is limited to high-level Soviet functionaries, including writings by senior political and military leaders that appeared over several years in the restricted journal of the Soviet general staff, *Voyennaya mysl'*. The contrast between the conclusions drawn from this material and those based on materials readily available and usually cited in the West is considerable.

It is my privilege to make this most timely and important study available to those professionals directly concerned with strategic weapons systems and related arms control negotiations, as well as to private American citizens whom their decisions are ultimately designed to protect.

RICHARD F. STAAR
Director of International Studies
Hoover Institution

Foreword

THIS SOBER AND CONSCIENTIOUS monograph is a major contribution to understanding the most important problem of our public life: "What is the Soviet Union up to?" Until we reach a national consensus on how to answer that question, we shall be unable to recover from the wounds of the Vietnam experience and to establish a foreign policy for the 1980s as affirmative, confident, and effective as the foreign and defense policies we pursued so successfully between 1947 and the early 1970s.

In *Soviet Strategy for Nuclear War*, Joseph D. Douglass, Jr. and Amoretta M. Hoeber present an analysis that belongs on a very short and important shelf along with recent work by Foy D. Kohler, Leon Goure, Avigdor Haselkorn, John Erickson, Colin Gray, and Charles M. Kupperman. Its subject is Soviet military doctrine. The book is based on a close and critical reading of Soviet military literature, insofar as it is available in the West. The pattern it reveals is consistent both internally and with Soviet actions in developing their formidable nuclear arsenal, deploying their conventional and nuclear forces, and translating them into political pressure.

What the Douglass-Hoeber study reveals is how the Soviet Union is using and planning to use its growing military power, both conventional and strategic, as an instrument of imperial expansion. Important spokesmen for the Soviet Union have often said that what they call "the correlation of forces" can be employed to determine the future course of world politics. In plain words, they are convinced that visible Soviet military superiority, both in conventional and nuclear arms, can be

focused to intimidate and paralyze the United States and its allies and thus permit the Soviet Union, by one intelligent move after another, to outflank, envelop, and neutralize the United States and Europe and force China, Japan, and many smaller states to acquiesce in Soviet dominion. Soviet military planning is based on an astute and realistic view of the geography of power. Within the broad framework of that theory, the Soviets take advantage of every opportunity to expand their influence and indeed create many such opportunities by subversion, propaganda, and proxy warfare.

Why have the American people found it so difficult to accept the Soviet view of Soviet policy? In the teeth of our experience since 1945, many of us persist in believing that detente in our relations with the Soviet Union is not an aspiration but a reality; that Soviet motivations are the same as our own; and that the Soviet Union is a conservative state, governed by a cautious, elderly ruling elite interested only in preserving the status quo.

The Soviet Union makes it clear that its policy is quite different. On August 5, 1978, in the course of a full dress speech in Karelia, Yuri Andropov, a member of the Politburo and head of the KGB, defined detente between the United States and the Soviet Union in terms that are breathtaking:

Here in Karelia, one must stress the significance attached to the lengthy experience of neighborly, genuinely equal and mutually advantageous cooperation between the Soviet Union and Finland. Soviet-Finnish relations today form an integral and stable system of equal cooperation in various spheres of political, economic and cultural life. This is detente embodied in daily contacts, detente which makes peace more lasting and people's lives better and more tranquil. In the last analysis this is the highly humane meaning of the foreign policy of socialism and the foreign policy activity of our party and the Soviet state.

In short, according to Andropov, the rules of detente require the United States to know its place, tug its forelock, leave world politics to the Soviet Union, and settle down to a life in which it would serve as a milch cow to the masters of world politics, buying

raw materials and selling food and manufactured goods at prices set by the new Imperium.

But we resist such statements, and we refuse to interpret the course of world politics in terms of the hypothesis that Soviet spokesmen mean exactly what they say.

In the media, the issues are debated in terms of slogans and shibboleths that bear no relation to reality. For the moment, "No more Vietnams" is a battle cry as potent as "No more Koreas" was in the fifties. The perennial American yearning for our nineteenth-century posture of isolation and neutrality has been given new life by the catastrophe of Vietnam. Well-meaning Americans contend that we should help only democratic nations that respect human rights—a small and diminishing group. They forget our alliance with Stalin against Hitler, our rapprochement with China to balance the Soviet Union, and many other practical policies made necessary by reality. The hardy faith of pacifism continues to flourish in the midst of a militarized world. Genuine communists and their fellow travelers still rally the innocents, their influence apparently undiminished by the repeated betrayals of the God who Failed.

But most American opinion remains practical, levelheaded, and intensely loyal to the nation. It is deeply confused, however, by one fundamental element of the situation: our leaders are not leading. Are they fulfilling Kissinger's policy that the facts about Soviet power and policy of expansion must be "concealed" from the American people while the government negotiates "the best deal it can get"?

President Carter has said we should not base our foreign policy on "an inordinate fear" of Soviet power, but he does not explain how to distinguish reasonable from "inordinate" concern with the problem. In the spring of 1978, he told the North Atlantic Council in London that the Soviet military position is "aggressive" in nature and could not be explained by considerations of defense. He repeated that comment in a number of later speeches. But during the fall he told a much larger audience on American television that Soviet policy is defensive in character and rooted in an exaggerated anxiety about the security of the Soviet Union. He added that the Soviet Union is not seeking either

military superiority or the power to threaten the United States or its allies with destruction we could not match. In this judgment, the president rejects the conclusion of the 1978 National Intelligence Estimate, which for the first time acknowledged that the Soviet Union is aiming at superiority, not parity, in the military arena. The president said:

To be perhaps excessively generous, but not too far off the mark, I think first of all [the Soviets] want peace and security for their own people and they undoubtedly exaggerate any apparent threat to themselves—and have to, to be sure that they are able to protect themselves.

At the same time, as is the case with us, they would like to expand their influence among other people in the world, believing that their system of government, their philosophy, is the best. . . .

They spend more than twice as much of their gross national product on military matters but we are still much stronger and we will always be stronger than they are, at least in our lifetimes. . . . We can absorb, even if we had to, an attack by the Soviets and still destroy their country, and they know it. And vice versa. . . .

We don't intend to evolve, and neither do the Soviets intend to evolve, a capability to destroy the other nation without ourselves being destroyed by nuclear forces.

The president's claim of American military superiority is contradicted by his own secretary of defense and by the publicly available statistics about Soviet military strength and the rate at which they are building tanks, ships, planes, missiles, and every other category of weapons. But he continues to repeat the claim as gospel truth. His painful justification for Soviet policy as "defensive" is even more disturbing. It recalls a comment by President Johnson about a leading senator during his tenure in office. "That fellow," the president said, "would find an excuse for the Russians if they landed in Mexico."

This dissonance is reflected at many other levels. Inside the government and out, people make it clear that while they do not want to be "alarmist" or "extreme" about the meaning of Soviet policy, they wonder nevertheless whether "detente" has perhaps been oversold and whether trade with the Soviet Union or restraint on our part in our military programs or cultural

relations or American silence about human rights might persuade the Soviet leaders to pursue a more peaceful course in Africa, the Middle East, and elsewhere.

Behind this resistance to the true nature of the problems we face is the psychological mechanism of denial, through which, as Bruno Bettelheim has said, people employ "various distancing devices, false analogies, and forms of outright denial" in order "not to have to come to grips with a grim reality."

"Denial," in Bettelheim's words,

is the earliest, most primitive, most inappropriate and ineffective of all psychological defenses used by man. When the event is potentially destructive, it is the most pernicious psychological defense, because it does not permit taking appropriate action which might safeguard against the real dangers. Denial therefore leaves the individual most vulnerable to the very perils against which he tried to defend himself. . . . It is easier to deny reality, when facing it would require taking unpleasant, difficult, or expensive actions.

A recent newspaper report puts the problem in a nutshell. In Jacksonville, Florida, at one of the administration's nationwide series of meetings to sell the SALT Treaty, the chairman was quoted as saying: "I felt that the Soviets were ahead of the U.S. It's a fear lurking back there you don't want to think about. It's scary." After a reassuring briefing by State Department officials, she said, "I feel better now."

Many reasonable and thoughtful British and American observers during the thirties found explanations or excuses for what Hitler was doing or screened out the events altogether; their counterparts today follow the same path and use almost the same words about the Soviet Union. Were these sentences written about the Germans under Hitler, or the Russians now? "After all, they are surrounded by potential enemies and need more arms for defense." "They have serious economic and social problems at home. They cannot be considering aggression." "They are only doing what we have done and are doing." "They suffered tremendous casualties in the last war and want only peace." "They are not ten feet tall, after all." In the thirties we were told that the Saar or Austria or the Sudetenland or Danzig was Hitler's

last territorial claim. Each time the formula was repeated, it was widely believed, despite what had happened already. There were always those who nodded their heads sagely and deplored "extremism" on the part of the few led by Churchill and Roosevelt who tried to rouse the West in time to prevent the war. Today we are assured that the Soviet invasion of Angola was "stabilizing"; that the Soviet conquest of the Horn of Africa is defensive or ineffective; and that the presence of advanced MIGs in Cuba makes no real difference because we have "no hard evidence" that they are armed with nuclear weapons (which can always be introduced anyway) and because the Soviets "have assured us," in President Carter's words on December 7, 1978, that the Soviet Union still stands behind its agreement with President Kennedy in 1962 not to place offensive weapons in Cuba.

Some invoke comforting thoughts about the Soviet Union which were not used to justify inaction during the thirties. "The Russians are barbarians, hopelessly inefficient and fatally addicted to alcohol. They could never make war against us." No one ever suggested that the Germans were inefficient. This line of denial does, however, recall the way in which many Americans dismissed the Japanese in the period before Pearl Harbor as mere imitators who could make toys but not serious weapons of war.

The prevalence of denial as a psychological problem today, like the comparable cult of denial about Hitler during the thirties, prevents us from dealing with our problems on the basis of what Bettelheim calls "recognition of the facts, correct assessments and interpretations of their implications, and mastery of the event on that basis."

If reason can overcome these powerful psychological defense mechanisms, *Soviet Strategy for Nuclear War* should prove to be one of the most useful of recent studies in convincing the American people that the Soviet rush for power, backed by formidable military forces organized and managed in accordance with a most formidable military doctrine, is a threat to our national security and must be dealt with urgently while there is still time to do so by peaceful deterrence and alliance diplomacy.

We, the Europeans, the Japanese, the Chinese, and a number of smaller like-minded states have more than enough power to contain the Soviet drive for hegemony. Our problem is one of understanding and then of will. The Douglass-Hoeber study will help immeasurably in achieving understanding.

EUGENE V. ROSTOW

CHAPTER I

Introduction

ON JANUARY 18, 1977, THE general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) Central Committee, L. I. Brezhnev, described as "absurd and totally unfounded" the allegation that the Soviet Union "strives for superiority in armaments with the aim of delivering a 'first strike' . . . the Soviet Union has always been and remains a convinced opponent of such concepts."

This statement was quoted in an article written for *Orbis* by Henry Trofimenko, a Soviet specialist on U.S. foreign policy and a member of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR.¹ The Trofimenko article was a carefully structured attack on those Western defense strategists concerned over the growth of Soviet military power and the emerging strategic nuclear imbalance. The article explained that the Soviet buildups to which such Western strategists were reacting were only those required to attain parity with the United States. The throw-weight gap, the military appropriations gap, the civil defense gap, and so forth, were all termed "myths fostered by the Pentagon" to justify and accelerate its own arms programs. Moreover, the Western nuclear strategists under attack were denigrated to the level of members of a religious cult, replete with rites, holy apostles, and "numerous disciples who recite the atomic catechism day and night." Trofimenko advised that these Western strategists would be better employed studying the problem of ensuring the survival of nations. Then, like the Soviets, they would realize that the only long-term solution is to demilitarize politics and, as a logical corollary, that national security can be ensured only by increasingly comprehensive

measures to limit and reduce armaments, not by unnecessary buildups.

This is the message and, by inference, the image of Soviet logic that the Soviets want to convey to the West. The Trofimenko article is quite consistent with other Soviet writings intended for Western consumption. The critical point of such articles is that the Soviets are not out to achieve useable superiority and that, in fact, nuclear strength is not politically useable.

However, as is usual in such Soviet articles, the subject discussed is U.S. strategy, not Soviet strategy. It is the U.S. nuclear dialogue that is placed under the microscope, not that of the Soviet Union. Soviet military thought on these matters, as written for internal Soviet consumption, shows a very different logic, both different from that which they would like to convince the West applies in the Soviet Union and different from many Western concepts that underlie U.S. strategic policies. It is the principal concepts of Soviet thought about global nuclear war as they appear to conceive of it among themselves that is the subject of the following pages.

In short, as is discussed in detail below, the Soviets address the prospects for war with the West seriously and, from their point of view, objectively. They believe that such a war is not an inconceivable event and that if such a war were to develop, it would be a coalition war—a clash between two different social systems, Soviet communism and Western capitalism. The Soviet view is that such a war would be a total war that would be pursued with the most decisive aims and would most likely begin as or rapidly develop into a nuclear conflict. Further, this war is not pictured as a mere exchange of nuclear strikes. Objectives and missions are carefully established, and operations of all military forces, not just nuclear forces, are coordinated and sequenced to achieve these objectives. In addition, the war is seen as involving economic, diplomatic, subversive, and ideological warfare.

Although such a war would clearly involve enormous destruction, in the Soviet view it would not be the end of the world. Nations could recover, especially the Soviet Union. Moreover, despite the unprecedented destruction, the war is viewed as winnable. Preparing to fight and win this war is the most important

task of Soviet military strategy. Critical aspects of this preparation include achieving both qualitative and quantitative superiority in military capability, beginning with nuclear capability; developing and implementing war survival measures to ensure rapid recovery of the economic and military potential of the Soviet Union; and establishing measures for postwar occupation and control of each of the probable theaters of military operations, both continental and intercontinental.

Surprise is perhaps the single most important factor in Soviet military thought. They emphasize the need never again to be "surprised" as they were in 1941. In the event of war with the West, the Soviets place great importance on seizing the initiative and striking first, with surprise if at all possible. The main objectives of such a strike would be to destroy the capability of the United States to organize a strong counterstrike; to achieve a preponderance of residual nuclear power; and, if that does not end the war, to intensify the effort and destroy the total military-economic potential of the United States. The major peacetime Soviet political-military goal is to achieve these capabilities vis-à-vis the West. And, essential to this process is the need to get the United States to forgo any military buildup that would deny the Soviets the possibility of achieving this relative capability—hence, the importance of selling to the West an image of the Soviet Union that encourages U.S. inaction.

In developing the analysis of Soviet military thought presented in this monograph, we have considered a wide variety of source material. This has principally included Soviet political and military literature from the 1960s and 1970s that is both authoritative or official and intended for internal use, that is, written specifically for higher-level Soviet military and political officers. Books of particular note that were used include *Soviet Military Strategy*, the single most important Soviet text on these matters since World War II;² *The Nuclear Revolution in Soviet Military Affairs*,³ which is a collection of Soviet open-source articles from the early 1960s; and the "Soviet Military Thought" series of Soviet books translated and published beginning in 1973 by the United States Air Force. This series contains several books from the basic Soviet "Officer's Library," a set of seventeen books developed between 1965 and

1975 for the stated purpose of arming the reader "with a knowledge of the fundamental changes which have taken place in recent years in military affairs."⁴

Special attention was also directed to the Soviet journal *Voyennaya mysl'*. This journal is the official military-theoretical organ of the Soviet Ministry of Defense⁵ and is also regarded as the official organ of the Soviet General Staff. It is a restricted or classified journal, written for senior officers of the Soviet armed forces, and is not usually available to Western analysts.* The journal is believed to be authoritative and designed strictly for internal Soviet use; hence, it can be considered less subject to propaganda or disinformation directed toward the West than those Soviet journals and newspapers that are routinely received in the West. Additionally, *Voyennaya mysl'* is believed to be of special importance because it is one of the few Soviet journals in which problems and issues of military strategy are regularly examined by senior military and party officials for other senior military officers. The evidence indicates that such writings are used to communicate national military policy and doctrine to the officer corps and are taken seriously and held in high esteem by that corps. It is therefore considered likely that these writings, taken as a whole, reflect an accurate picture of Soviet thought.

Quite recently, over 5,000 pages of translated text of issues of this journal from 1963 to 1969 were declassified and made available to the public through the Library of Congress. Because of its limited availability and perhaps because of its presumed obsolescence, few analyses have used this material. However, although these *Voyennaya mysl'* articles—and certain other military textbooks cited in this work—are from the mid- to late sixties, they should not be regarded as necessarily out of date. Most of this material is directed toward the future and is particularly concerned with problems that need to be solved and with directions for force development and planning for use. Analysis of such writings from the mid- to late sixties, if anything, provides an indication of what to expect in capabilities for the seventies and

*It was information from selected top secret issues of this journal that are referred to as the Special Collection on the New Soviet Military Doctrine that was passed to the West by Colonel Oleg V. Penkovskiy in the early sixties prior to his arrest by Soviet KGB agents in October, 1962.⁶

beyond. Further, all materials used in the following analysis appeared during the Brezhnev regime and are believed to reflect the political-military philosophy of that regime, which is still in power. In addition, it is particularly relevant that no serious contradictions or inconsistencies between the earlier and the more recent Soviet military writings have been identified by us.

Nevertheless, in any study of this material, the question of possible alternative interpretations invariably arises. This is a very difficult question. Interpretations of this material and the images of the Soviet approach to military problems that have been derived from studying this material have varied widely. However, most often, the objectives and perspectives of such studies differ; thus, it is very difficult to compare different studies, to analyze the extent to which they are in agreement, and to identify and reconcile any real differences. In sum, however, there do appear to be significant differences in interpretation. Certain of these differences may have serious impact on Western perceptions, programs, and plans; therefore, a detailed and critical analysis of the underlying data bases and methodologies is warranted. In order to facilitate comparison of this analysis with others, it may be useful to discuss explicitly the approach used here.

The methodology used in this study was first to read and reread this material to understand the Soviet mind-set and isolate the basic principles that appear to dominate Soviet military thought. In contrast to much of Western military literature, the Soviet literature is seriously directed to the problems of fighting and winning a nuclear war. Moreover, we discovered no evidence of the existence of opposing schools of military thought as are found in the West. The Soviet literature is extremely consistent; different categories of sources (e.g., journals and textbooks) agree and, except for occasional, gradual developments in basic themes, are consistent over time. This consistency prompted us to reconstruct the basic themes of Soviet thought on world nuclear war. The material was then systematically reexamined to fill in details and supply documentation.

Our perception is that Soviet thought about and concepts of global nuclear war present a coherent pattern linking party policy, military doctrine and strategy, and force development.

Although a detailed treatment of the correspondence between policy and strategy on the one hand and developing Soviet capabilities on the other is beyond the scope of this monograph, we believe that such an analysis would demonstrate that Soviet force deployments and characteristics match their doctrine and strategy. And, where discrepancies in the fit occur, it appears that the implied force capabilities often require time to emerge completely due to simple development priorities rather than that there is a lack of validity in the underlying doctrine and strategy. It is obvious that all details of Soviet thinking cannot be discerned from the materials examined. However, we have concluded that there is sufficient basis for the interpretations presented here to warrant their presentation and serious consideration.

CHAPTER II

The Soviet View of Nuclear War— Nuclear Warfighting

*"WAR IS SIMPLY THE CONTINUATION of politics by other (i.e., violent) means."*¹ (Emphasis in original) This is a primary thesis of Soviet ideology and military thought.² Nuclear war—even world nuclear war—is no exception.³ The Soviets emphasize that one important dimension of U.S. thinking, namely, that nuclear war is the end rather than the continuation of politics, is invalid:

This does not mean that nuclear war . . . has ceased to be an instrument of politics, as is claimed by the overwhelming majority of representatives of pacifist, anti-war movements in the bourgeois world. This is a subjective judgment. It expresses merely protest against nuclear war.⁴

Although war is a continuation of politics, with the onset of war a distinct change occurs. During war, military doctrine, which is the Soviet equivalent of U.S. national security policy, withdraws somewhat into the background. War is to be "guided primarily by military-political and military-strategic considerations . . . war and armed conflict are guided not by doctrine but by strategy."⁵ Thus, preparation for war, especially world nuclear war, is the principal mission of Soviet strategy:

The Soviet government . . . and their armed forces must be ready primarily for a world war. . . . the Armed Forces of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries must be prepared above all to wage war under conditions of the mass use of nuclear weapons by both belligerent parties.

... the preparation and waging of just such a war must be regarded as the main task of the theory of military strategy and strategic leadership.⁶

The goal of Soviet military strategy is to identify what is required in terms of organization, tactics, and systems to fight and win a nuclear war, beginning with world nuclear war, and to effect these requirements:

The determination of the composition of the armed forces for peacetime and especially for time of war; the making of a reserve of arms, military equipment, and, primarily, nuclear rocket weapons as the main means of war, as well as material reserves, deploying strategic groups and organizing the all-around security of the armed forces in time of war—this is the crucial task of military strategy.⁷

Global nuclear war is defined by the Soviets much more broadly than the strategic nuclear exchange envisioned by the United States. It is seen as an all-encompassing conflict between communism and capitalism that would involve all areas of the world and most major countries:

Nuclear war ... should not be thought of as a gigantic technical enterprise alone—as a launching of an enormous number of missiles with nuclear warheads to destroy the vital objectives and manpower of the enemy, or as operations by the armed forces alone. Nuclear war is a complex and many-sided process, which in addition to the operation of the armed forces will involve economic, diplomatic and ideological forms of struggle. They will all serve the political aims of the war and be guided by them.⁸

Furthermore, the U.S. distinction between strategic as intercontinental and tactical as theater only is not applicable in Soviet thought. Strategic is a categorization that is related to aims rather than to locations; strategic objectives can be achieved on a very local battlefield in the Soviets' usage of the word.

It is recognized that nuclear war, particularly global nuclear war, could result in unprecedented destruction and is, therefore, of extreme danger. Because of the magnitude of this danger, the

Soviets emphasize both the need to prevent nuclear war and, at the same time, the need to prepare for it. As phrased in *Voyennaya mysl'*, world nuclear war is viewed as having two aspects: "The necessity of its prevention, and . . . the possibility of its being waged."⁹ Here, and elsewhere in the Soviet literature, however, the word "prevent" should not be confused with the word "avoid." "Prevent," as used by the Soviets in discussing their strategy, has strong, aggressive, action-oriented overtones and is more often used in the sense of preventing by "seizing the initiative" and "preempting" to "disrupt" the enemy's attack, as in the following passages:

An armed conflict is a bilateral process. A purposeful, maximum possible counteraction of one side is organized for each action of the other of the combatants. Therefore, being developed and introduced simultaneously with the development and introduction of methods of achieving surprise are opposing methods for preventing (disrupting) surprise of attack and surprise of strikes in the course of a war.

What are the ways of forestalling and preventing (disrupting) a surprise attack? They are perhaps just as numerous and varied as are the methods for achieving surprise, and they are dictated to a large extent by a specifically developed situation. The mission consists in delving deeply into the essence of the manifestation of surprise and possible ways of achieving it.

Consequently, to prevent and disrupt a surprise enemy attack, it is necessary to have, besides combat-ready forces and means, data on his preparation for a war and the thorough analysis of it. The chief thing is to delve deeply by means of individual and even insignificant intelligence indicators into the content of the intentions and plans of the enemy, foresee the possible nature of operations, not permit oneself to be deceived by a false maneuver, and be ready to counter his most unexpected methods.¹⁰

Without a doubt, our armed forces must be prepared to disrupt these aggressive plans by inflicting destructive strikes, using all available land, sea and air weapons of war.¹¹

To prevent a surprise attack, it is necessary to stop the enemy; and the surest way to do that is by preempting and destroying the enemy's weapons before they can be launched. In Soviet strategy

"prevention," "preparation," and "preemption" are closely related concepts. Conversely, it is very rare to encounter the word "avoid" in the Soviet literature. The word the Soviets use is "avert," which implies turning aside, but not backing down or being unwilling to confront the prospects of nuclear war, as the word "avoid" tends to suggest. The Soviets address nuclear war very seriously, and, as has been noted by several experts, based on independent study, their approach to nuclear war is one of both war fighting and war winning.¹²

Closely coupled with the notion of nuclear war as a continuation of politics and the need to prepare for such a war is the Soviet disagreement with Western beliefs that not only would nuclear war be the end of politics but also that there can be no victor in such a war:

There is profound error and harm in the disorienting claims of bourgeois ideologues that there will be no victor in a thermonuclear world war. The peoples of the world will put an end to imperialism, which is causing mankind incalculable suffering.¹³

An integral aspect of Soviet military strategy is their belief that under favorable circumstances they can indeed win. The depth of this belief is difficult for many in the West to understand and accept as a legitimate view.¹⁴ Not only, however, do the Soviets hold this view, but it appears to be often reexamined and reaffirmed. A similar conclusion also appears to have been reached independently in the study, *The Role of Nuclear Forces in Current Soviet Strategy*:

More recently, in 1965–1967, there was a renewal of the public debate over the possibility of attaining victory in a nuclear war. The debate evidently was resolved in favor of those who still stressed the feasibility of waging and winning such a war, and since 1967 public statements by Soviet spokesmen on the possibility of "mutual destruction" have become relatively rare.¹⁵

A major portion of Soviet military strategy is geared to understanding the favorable circumstances under which nuclear war can be won by the Soviet Union and to effecting these circumstances. This is the principal subject of the Soviet text, *The People,*

the Army, the Commander. Although the title suggests an ideological treatise on the unity of the Soviet people and their leadership, the book is in fact an examination of global nuclear war and the political, economic, moral, administrative, and leadership factors that, according to the author, would bring victory in such a war.¹⁶ The factors that appear to be particularly important include the correlation of nuclear forces, capabilities to maintain secrecy and to assure surprise, ability of the leadership to manage the war effort, and preparation of the country (dispersal of critical industries and civil defense) and the people.

The Soviet literature consistently emphasizes the need for "objective assessments," "sober calculation," "scientific substantiation," and the need to avoid "subjectivistic distortions of reality."¹⁷ Decisions regarding war and war preparations are to be based on a comprehensive understanding of what the Soviets term the "objective laws" of war and on a "scientific assessment" of the situation. According to the authoritative Soviet text, *Marxism-Leninism on War and the Army*, Soviet military science and practice are based on "the scientific reflection of reality, the analysis of the objective state of affairs, a sober appraisal of the situation."¹⁸ War develops, as *The People, the Army, the Commander* explains,

on the basis of objective laws which are independent of man's volition. . . . Leadership in war can be successful only if crucial decisions are in conformity with the demands of the laws of war. . . . Knowing the requirements of the laws . . . political and military leaders are able to plan their actions in advance, to implement decisions purposefully, to mobilize the energy and productive activity of the general populace with the aim of achieving the desired results.¹⁹

The Soviet rationale is simple:

. . . Once the military movements on land and sea have been started, they are no longer subject to the desires and plans of diplomacy, but rather to their own laws, which cannot be violated without endangering the entire expedition. [Quoting Engels]²⁰

This concept not only permeates the Soviet literature, both military and political, but it was considered of sufficient importance

to be placed prominently in Premier Khrushchev's October 26 correspondence to President Kennedy during the 1962 Cuban missile crisis:

In your statement, you said that the main aim lies not only in reaching agreement and adopting measures to avert contact of our ships, and, consequently, a deepening of the crisis, which because of this contact can spark off the fire of military conflict after which any talks would be superfluous because other forces and other laws would begin to operate—the laws of war.²¹

Another Soviet concept—or more properly, set of concepts—that is difficult for the West to understand is what is often viewed in the United States as an inconsistency in Soviet thinking: the short-war, long-war dichotomy. The Soviets believe that a nuclear war could be a short war and that this, indeed, would be the preferred type of war. The short-war concept seems to imply that the Soviets would catch the United States unprepared—either in the sense of a successful and decisive Soviet surprise attack or in the sense of the United States being unprepared to fight beyond the initial nuclear exchange (a possibility that would be consistent with the Soviet perception that the predominant bourgeois view is that nuclear war is the end rather than a continuation of politics). The Soviet attack is thus seen as potentially bringing about the rapid capitulation of the West.

At the same time, the Soviets recognize that it is impossible to rely on rapidly knocking out of the war a country with large territorial and industrial resources if that country is, indeed, prepared for war:

In a war against a strong enemy, with extensive territory enabling him to use space and time for the organization of active and passive defense, the maneuver of forces and the mobilization of reserves—a single attack with strategic rocket nuclear weapons is not enough for a complete victory over such an enemy.²²

Further, although it may be possible early in the war to eliminate certain countries, including perhaps the United States, such a war is a class war and may continue for some time. This is because the Soviets would need to achieve victory over the remnants of the

imperialist coalition and, at the same time, hold off certain "jackals" (e.g., China) during the recovery period. Therefore, the Soviets have recognized since the early 1960s that one cannot count on a strategic war being short; such a war could become protracted, and, hence, it is as important to prepare for a protracted war as for a short one.

The main difference between a short and a long war is that the former is principally fought by existing forces using resources that are immediately available. Although mobilization of forces and of the economy for war would be the highest-priority activity as soon as war was perceived a significantly likely possibility (and hence is independent of which type of war might develop), the contribution of economic mobilization to a short war is much less because one cannot plan on having sufficient time for full economic mobilization to have an impact on the progress of the war before it is over. Although existing forces are also viewed as critical in a long war, by themselves they are considered insufficient for that war. In the long-war case, mobilization of both the military and the civilian sectors of the economy is viewed as particularly crucial and is emphasized in the Soviet literature and in their planning. In both the short-war and the long-war cases, mobilization is also necessary so that the recovery of the Soviet Union can progress as rapidly as possible; in the short-war case it is also necessary as a hedge against the possibility of a long war. Hence, mobilization is always pursued.

CHAPTER III

Soviet Warfighting Objectives— Conditions of Victory

THE SOVIETS SEE A global nuclear war as being the most decisive of all wars. In the Soviet view, the coalition war will lead, if the Soviet Union is properly prepared, to the defeat of capitalism and victory for Soviet communism. In the Soviet literature this defeat is not represented as a mere partial defeat but rather as a "total defeat":

The CPSU considers it essential to maintain the defensive might of the Soviet state and the combat readiness of its Armed Forces at a level ensuring the decisive and total defeat of any enemy who dares attack the Soviet homeland.¹

And the goal of Soviet military doctrine and strategy "is total destruction of the enemy. Lenin stated that in conducting combat 'we must not "knock down" but rather *destroy* the enemy. . . .'"² The Soviets see a global nuclear war as one that will involve all theaters of operation and most major or bloc nations. This notion is in keeping with their view of nuclear war as a continuation of politics and their definition of the modern epoch as the period of transition from capitalism to socialism in all nations. A global nuclear war would be pursued with this transition in mind, and the basic Soviet goal is, therefore, the survival and spread of communism at the expense of capitalism.

The Soviet objective in any war, and especially in a global nuclear war, is victory. The five specific conditions that are described in the Soviet literature as constituting victory in any

war are defeat of the enemy military potential; seizure of strategic areas; occupation of territory; installation of governments favorable to Soviet communism; and, ultimately, ideological conversion. All five are deemed essential components of victory, although the relative importance and the schedule for accomplishing each may vary from war to war.

It should be noted that each of these conditions of victory is pursued in peacetime both as part of the normal Soviet revolutionary political strategy and as part of the preparations for war in all probable theaters and at any time. Such Soviet peacetime activities are of considerable importance, but a detailed examination of them is beyond the scope of this work. The primary emphasis of this analysis is the wartime aspects, including those war-related activities immediately preceding the outbreak of actual conflict.

Defeat of Enemy Forces and Potential

The most important immediate objective is the defeat of the enemy forces, particularly their nuclear capability. This appears to be the most important initial strategic mission of the war. This is made clear in all Soviet discussions of targeting strategy and is treated in more detail below. In effect, this is regarded as the "nuclear battle" portion of the war. It constitutes the main component of the initial period of the war, if not the definition of that period itself.

In the recent U.S. literature, questions have been raised concerning the possibility of a purely counterforce Soviet attack, and the word "counterforce" usually is used in these questions in its strictest sense, referring only to the attack on the nuclear delivery vehicles themselves. Although the defeat of enemy forces is a primary mission, nothing has been identified in the Soviet literature to suggest that a Soviet attack in the pursuit of this strategic mission might be limited to hitting only nuclear delivery vehicles. Moreover, and perhaps more fundamental, in our view, describing a Soviet attack in these U.S. terms may be both erroneous and misleading. Counterforce and countervalue are U.S. target-oriented approaches to categorizing strategy.

Counterforce and countervalue, as concepts, are seldom encountered in Soviet discussions of strategy except in reference to U.S. strategic concepts.³ Rather, Soviet strategy is characterized in a different manner; it is oriented around a goal and missions to achieve that goal. Although successful attack of enemy forces is primary and essential, the Soviet goal of victory defines this attack as a part of broader strategy:

For the achievement of victory in a present-day nuclear war, if it is unleashed by the imperialists, not only the enemy's armed forces, but also the sources of his military power, the important economic centers, and also points of military and state control as well as the areas where different branches of armed forces are based, will be subjected to simultaneous destruction.⁴

Explicit in the Soviet discussions is the principle that the enemy forces should never again be useable against the interests of Soviet communism. This is why the phrases "sources of military power" and "military potential" recur in discussions of strategic targets. And this is one reason why the common U.S. concept of counterforce does not apply. In order to destroy military *potential*, it is necessary to strike targets other than in-being military "force" targets:

The power of nuclear weapons will be concentrated above all toward destruction of the military-economic *potential*, defeat of the groupings of armed forces, and undermining of the morale of the population. Very important strategic missions of the armed forces can be the destruction of the largest industrial and administrative-political centers, power systems, and stocks of strategic raw materials and materiel; disorganization of the system of state and military control; destruction of the main transport centers; and destruction of the main groupings of troops, especially of the means of nuclear attack.⁵ (Emphasis added)

The "strategic aim of the actions of armed forces" during a war

may be formulated as a task involving some degree of weakening or undermining the economic, moral-political and purely military *potentials* of an enemy coalition or country, as a result of which the

enemy will be unable to continue the war in an organized manner.⁶
(Emphasis added)

Destruction of military-economic targets, destruction of groupings of armed forces, and undermining of morale are of highest priority. (Note the leading importance of power systems as part of the military-economic category. These may, in fact, be the single most important noncounterforce targets in Soviet strategy. See chapter 6.)

Although the weight of the initial effort is counternuclear (i.e., against the so-called "active" targets), there is to be "rational" distribution between active and "passive" targets, where passive targets "include the military-economic and administrative-political centers, and also other targets which are not directly involved in the application of nuclear weapons."⁷ The attack is viewed as achieving "political *and* military objectives." It is not viewed as limited to a subset of strictly military targets. The political objective is to achieve victory; this results in a requirement that enough be destroyed so that the enemy is unable to continue the war:

Today's weapons make it possible to achieve strategic objectives very quickly. The very first nuclear attack on the enemy may inflict such immense casualties and produce such vast destruction that his economic, moral-political and military capabilities will collapse, making it impossible for him to continue the struggle, and presenting him with the fact of defeat.⁸

Exactly how much destruction this would require, in the Soviet view, is not clear from their literature. However, even when exercising restraint, required actions are described as "ruthlessly" designed to achieve victory:

On the other hand, if the aim of war is just and progressive, then by no means are the classes and states waging it indifferent to the ways and means this purpose will be attained. And in this sense the principles of a just war reject senseless cruelty and violent actions not dictated by military necessity. Here, however, it must be remembered that even just wars demand sacrifices, and it is inconceivable to attain victory in them without severe, ruthless actions

aimed at the decisive rout of the enemy, for such is the nature and law of armed conflict in general.⁹

In examining the first condition of victory—the defeat of the enemy forces and potential—it is possible to discern five sub-objectives that are involved in its achievement. The first is surprise. The objective is, on the one hand, the prevention of surprise *by* the West in an attack on the Soviet Union and, on the other hand, the accomplishment of surprise *of* the West in a Soviet attack. Surprise is very important to the Soviets, and the issues of strategy and tactics to achieve surprise receive considerable attention. Surprise is viewed as potentially decisive in determining who wins the war. Several of the dimensions of the Soviet view of surprise are discussed in detail in chapters 4 and 7.

The second subobjective is to make the enemy incapable of retaliating by disrupting and disorganizing his political and military control. The enemy will thus be unable to organize a defense or a counteroffensive. Most important in this regard at the beginning of the war is the prevention of a U.S. decision to preempt or launch a counterstrike based on warning of the Soviet attack. Clearly, this reinforces the importance of the first sub-objective, surprise.

The third subobjective is to make the enemy incapable of response by destroying the ready military forces, both nuclear weapons and conventional forces, that could be used against the Soviet Union as well as the ability of the West to regenerate either of these. This subobjective would receive the main weight of the Soviet attack, although the most important first strikes would be in furtherance of the second subobjective.

In the initial strike, the attacker seizes the initiative and delivers a surprise, stunning blow. At the same time it is essential to organize the defense of the Soviet homeland in order to repulse any counterstrike that the West might manage to launch. This is the fourth subobjective, which is heavily oriented toward air and missile defense, antisubmarine warfare, and civil defense.

Finally, it is possible to seize the initiative and deliver a substantial blow to the enemy's military forces at the beginning of the war, but this by itself is considered insufficient. To defeat the enemy, it is essential to maintain the initiative and increase the momentum of the attack.¹⁰ This final task would include suffi-

cient strikes to complete the disorganization of government administration, destroy the potential of the enemy to continue the war, and demoralize the population. This is required to present the enemy with the undeniable fact of defeat.

These tasks or subobjectives are all contained within the basic immediate strategic mission of defeat of the enemy's forces and potential. The priority accorded each may vary over the course of the conflict, but all play a role in achieving the first condition of victory.

Seizure of Strategic Areas

A second important strategic mission to be accomplished early in the war is the seizure of strategic areas. By this is generally meant critical islands, archipelagos, and straits, but it may also include entire countries or sections of countries, particularly those that would influence the strategic movements of Soviet forces or provide important leverage. In order to accomplish this, according to all three editions of the important text, *Military Strategy*, it is not enough

to destroy the enemy's means of nuclear attack, to defeat his main forces by nuclear-rocket attacks, and to disorganize the interior. For final victory in this clearly-expressed class war it will be absolutely necessary to bring about the complete defeat of the enemy's armed forces, to deprive him of strategic bridgeheads, to liquidate his military bases, and to seize strategically important regions. Moreover, we must not allow enemy ground armies, air, and naval landing forces to invade the territories of the socialist countries; we must hold these territories; the internal security of the socialist countries must be protected from subversive actions of the aggressor. *All* these and a number of other problems can be solved only by the Ground Troops in cooperation with the other services of the Armed Forces.¹¹ (Emphasis added)

In the Soviet view, even their strategic missile forces will not solve all problems of war. To achieve victory:

It is still not sufficient to destroy the military potential of the aggressor, his strategic combat weapons, and his main groups of

armed forces, and to destroy his government and military leadership. For final victory it is absolutely necessary to defeat the armed forces of the enemy, capture his military bases, if for some reason they cannot be destroyed, and to seize strategically important regions. In addition, it is also necessary to defend one's own country from invasion by land, air, and naval forces. These tasks and a number of others can be performed only by modern Ground Troops who are reasonably strong in composition, armament, and organization. They will play a very important part in achieving the final war aims. Therefore, Ground Troops remain the most numerous service of the Armed Forces and they will have the task of solving the main problems of war in the land theaters of military operations.¹²

World nuclear war is not just a set of intercontinental missile strikes to the Soviets. As noted above, the Soviets see such a war as being global in character, involving most major and bloc countries. Thus, it is likely that the Soviets would not consider any area to be a sanctuary:

The struggle with the bourgeois ideology is the most important sector of the class struggle. It is emphasized in the decree of the CPSU Central Committee that in the struggle with this ideology, there is not and cannot be any neutralism or any compromises.¹³

Moreover, no compromise between communism and capitalism is possible:

The communist ideology—Marxism-Leninism—declares a decisive war on capitalist exploitation and scientifically grounds the need for revolutionary destruction of capitalism and its replacement with a socialist and communist social order. Thus, communist and bourgeois ideologies are irreconcilable, as are the interests of the proletariat and all workers with the interests of capitalists. Lenin wrote "... the question is only: bourgeois or socialist ideology. There is no middle ground here. ..."¹⁴

In the Soviet view, a country is either for or against them, a distinction that would be most severely drawn in a general war situation. In either case, Soviet and other Warsaw Pact troops

would move to protect or seize any area that they considered valuable to the war or to their subsequent recovery. At the beginning of the war, then, the Soviets, with the assistance of the other Warsaw Pact nations, should be expected to seize or otherwise secure such strategically important areas as Sweden, Norway, and Denmark in the North and Turkey and Greece in the South, neutrals with important industrial or economic assets such as Austria and Switzerland, and, of special importance, Middle East oil-producing areas.

All criteria of victory, including that of seizure of strategic areas, appear to consider recovery and reconstitution right from the start. Rules of war and traditions of neutrality appear to be of little concern. All strategic targets for the conduct of the war *and recovery*, including economic and industrial centers, are, in effect, studied in advance to determine whether they should be destroyed, put out of action, or seized, and when and by whom.

One of the indications that oil is considered by the Soviets to be particularly important both to the war and to recovery is that Soviet discussions of economic and industrial targeting and recovery always begin with oil and power. For example, from a Soviet analysis of allied strategic bombing in World War II:

It is known that oil is also one of the most important strategic raw materials. Its products are required in large quantities for the operation of the most important branches of industry, agriculture and transportation. During the war the oil supply problem was very acute for both Germany and Japan. Their defeat would have been significantly accelerated if it had been possible already in the early period of the war to concentrate air strikes on targets connected with the production of liquid fuels.¹⁵

Oil is a particularly noteworthy example of the Soviet view that seizure and control of important areas are strategic missions that are to be pursued in peacetime as well as in wartime, both as part of the peacetime preparation for war and as part of their long-term plan to bring about the transition from capitalism to communism on a global scale. This pursuit would be increased in time of approaching war; for example, economic blockades of certain

countries, which may be established before the war starts, are clearly considered:

Under all conditions, a menacing period will evidently be filled with a considerable complex of varied measures carried out by both sides along diplomatic, political, economic, and military lines. . . .

In the field of the economy, the aggressor might begin to partially transfer his industry to military production, implement the forced accumulation of additional stocks of strategic raw materials and *set up an economic blockade* of certain countries.¹⁶ (Emphasis added)

War is taken seriously as the continuation of politics, not as its end, and the postwar period is seen by the Soviets to be basically the continuation of those policies of the Soviet Union that were in effect prior to the war—subject to modifications introduced by the war itself. Soviet ideology and military doctrine are offensive, and the war would be conducted to bring about those objectives that were being pursued prior to the outbreak of war, albeit less violently.

Occupation and Control

Although the Soviets believe that a mass initial nuclear strike can “predetermine the subsequent course of the war,”¹⁷ can accomplish major strategic missions, and can ensure total defeat, it generally is viewed as insufficient to complete the job. Maintaining the strategic initiative through to and including occupation and control is essential for completing victory. This thought sequence has been consistently voiced for many years in the Soviet military literature, which emphasizes that “combat operations will continue for the purpose of the final defeat of the enemy on his own territory”¹⁸ and that “ground forces, using the results of strategic nuclear strikes, will complete the defeat and annihilation of the enemy and the seizure of his territory.”¹⁹ Statements such as these are generally considered to apply to Europe:

Under conditions where nuclear rocket weapons are used . . . that side which manages during the first days of the war to penetrate more deeply into enemy territory naturally acquires the capability for more effectively using the results of its nuclear attacks and disrupting the mobilization of the enemy. This is especially important with respect to European theaters of operations with their relatively small operative depth.²⁰

If, however, occupation and control are *especially* important in Europe, perhaps they are also important with respect to the intercontinental theater.

In considering this issue, it is important to repeat the point that the Soviets do not view a war merely in terms of an exchange of nuclear blows. Nuclear war is considered not the end of the process of conflict, but rather an intermediate stage. In planning a war, the Soviets focus on the outcome and in particular on the postwar political environment. Nuclear war is not seen as the end of civilization. People and nations will recover:

In spite of the colossal damage which can be caused by rocket and nuclear strikes, it is impossible to completely deprive a large country, and all the more so a coalition of states, of strategic capabilities. *One cannot discard the reserves of the war industry, the possibility of its protection, and under conditions of prolonged war, during its concluding period—the restoration of the destroyed production.*²¹ (Emphasis added)

Further, in statements like the “annihilation of the enemy and the seizure of his territory,” the “enemy” is capitalism and the *main* enemy is the United States. Soviet military and political planning has to consider this “up front”:

The chief military stronghold of imperialism is the United States. This is the result not only of the leading role of this country as the main power of the capitalist world, but also by the proportion of American armed forces in the overall system of the armed forces of imperialism. The United States now has more than 50 percent of the total number of armed forces of all the NATO countries, more than 90 percent of the ICBMs and missile-firing

submarines, more than 80 percent of the strategic and 60 percent of the tactical aircraft, about 40 percent of the naval forces, and up to 50–60 percent of the conventional types of armament.²²

The Soviets, in developing their war strategy, view the United States as their primary problem:

The leading nation of the imperialist camp, the United States, which possesses approximately two thirds of the military-economic potential of NATO, is located on the distant North American continent. Military strategy cannot fail to take note of the existing situation, both as it applies to developing the armed forces and also as it applies to the problem of conducting combat operations.²³

The Soviet Union is clearly impressed with the economic and military *potential* of the United States when “aroused.” It is most important to the Soviets that they recover first and that the United States not be “given” the opportunity to recover and strike back as it did following Pearl Harbor. Hence, the Soviet approach to global war is one of total victory and total defeat. The Soviet Union justifies this approach by projecting its own goals onto its competitors:

In a new world war, the imperialist bloc would strike for maximum destruction of the armed forces and the deep interior of the socialist countries, attempt to liquidate their social-political system and establish capitalist systems instead, and enslave the people of these countries.

The Soviet Union and the countries of people's democracy, in order to protect their socialist achievements, will be forced to adopt *no less decisive aims* directed towards the *total defeat* of the armed forces of the enemy with simultaneous disorganization of his interior zone, and towards suppression of the enemy's will to resist, and rendering aid to the people to free them from the yoke of imperialism.²⁴ (Emphasis added)

Although it is often difficult to distinguish between the continental and intercontinental theaters in Soviet discussions and between Soviet discussions of their strategy and of U.S. strategy, statements on occupation and control are believed to apply in

Soviet strategy to the United States almost as much as they apply to Europe, but for somewhat different reasons and perhaps involving some vastly different approaches or options. Thus, "rendering aid to the people to free them from the yoke of imperialism" may apply to the United States in a "new world war" as much as it applied to Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Germany, and the Baltic states in the aftermath of the Great Patriotic War (the Soviet term for their side of World War II).

Drawing from historical experience, from the Soviet literature, and from the personal insights of several East European and Soviet defectors into the Soviet approach to subversion and control, one can hypothesize further on possible Soviet thinking relative to occupation and control of the United States. First, the Soviets categorize people as realists, hawks, and also, for political convenience, temporary in-betweens. In a speech on August 5, 1978, KGB Chief Yuri Andropov explained that U.S. leaders can be divided into three groups. Some

occupying realistic positions, proceed from the premise that with the present correlation of forces in the world arena there is no acceptable alternative to detente and that therefore capitalism must adapt to the new situation. . . .

Others—the so-called "hawks" who represent the interests of the military-industrial complex—oppose this with all their might. They propose gripping the cudgel a little more firmly and brandishing it until the world finds itself in the grip of a dangerous East-West confrontation and returns to the trenches of the "cold war."

Finally, there is a third type. They are aware in general of the catastrophic consequences of a global thermonuclear conflict. They are even ready to achieve limited agreements reducing the level of international tension. But they are afraid of the changes that detente brings in international and domestic affairs. Hence the instability and hesitation in policy, the increasing gulf between words and deeds, the desire to appease the right flank and to make concessions to overtly militarist, highly reactionary forces.²⁵

That this statement was made by the chief of the KGB is especially important because of the special role of the KGB in drawing up such lists and in specifying and carrying out appropriate arrests and dispositioning. The KGB likely has lists of a

considerable number of U.S. leaders, with each, in effect, categorized as a realist, hawk, or unknown. An initial Soviet objective would be to bring appropriate "realists" in the United States into power. Consider, for example, the following statement from a mid-1960s *Voyennaya mysl'* article on types and forms of combat operations:

We believe that the main determinant in the attack is the most decisive operation possible, having for its purpose the total destruction of the enemy's armed forces, and particularly the destruction of his nuclear weapons; that is, the achievement of results such that he would no longer be capable of offering further resistance within the limits of missions being carried out, or which would be needed for general capitulation. In the past this aim was possible of achievement only with the successive forward movement of land forces (or the navy) to close with the enemy and to destroy his firepower. In the modern attack, when the mission of destruction can be accomplished by nuclear strikes, made at any depth, practically speaking, forward movement becomes a secondary item. It is not even necessary in certain cases. This situation can arise, for example, when the enemy, as a result of the massive nuclear strikes inflicted upon him, such strikes being the main part of the attack, *capitulates and peace-loving forces accede to political power in his country*. . . .²⁶ (Emphasis added)

How this would be accomplished is unclear. However, one can posit a campaign of propaganda and covert actions designed to create favorable images for preferred candidates, to set unfavored power groups against each other, and, possibly, to eliminate any unfavored individuals that emerge as contenders. Clearly, such actions would require sufficient control of communications to prevent the normal democratic process from operating and the "wrong" elements from mobilizing the nation from coast to coast. By definition, a favored candidate would see the necessity of relying on KGB advisors and on having his staff and key appointments "approved" by Moscow.

The appropriate climate in which such an approach might succeed may be that described in the Soviet literature as moral-political disintegration—a setting in which a change of government to negotiate a realistic termination of the war might be

“welcomed” or at least accepted by the “silent majority.” This moral-political disintegration is specified in the Soviet literature as one of the objectives of the nuclear strike along with destruction of the nuclear means and military potential. The strategic aim is described as “undermining the economic, moral-political, and purely military potentials, as a result of which the enemy will be unable to continue the war in an organized manner.”²⁷ In such a war, “the power of nuclear weapons will be concentrated above all toward destruction of the military-economic potential, defeat of the groupings of armed forces, and undermining of the morale of the population.”²⁸

How the Soviets would attempt to bring about the moral-political disintegration that would contribute to such a situation is a most interesting question. Some of the efforts to do this are likely to be propaganda activities both prior to and during the initial period of the war. Such potential activities are discussed below. Another possibility is that attacks on selected cities themselves may be considered for this precise purpose. Soviet analysis of strategic bombing during World War II notes that neither attack on many cities (Germany) nor conventional destruction (the Tokyo firebombings) forced the capitulation of the enemy; in fact, such attacks were counterproductive (i.e., they mobilized rather than demoralized the population). On the other hand, the nuclear destruction of two cities, neither of which possessed great strategic significance, is seen by the Soviets as having been conducted for principally political reasons and as having hastened the Japanese surrender without arousing the great wrath of the people, which the destruction of Tokyo—the most important strategic objective in Japan—would have done.²⁹ Taking a page out of history, the Soviet Union might consider that the U.S. population is politically unprepared for nuclear war and conclude that the United States is in an optimum condition for the successful replay of this strategy. Thus, nuclear strikes might be used against some cities specifically to create disruption and social disintegration. This may be what is meant by the following statement:

In a number of cases it is possible that attacks will even be made against objectives which are not of great military and economic

importance, but which are advantageous from a political viewpoint.³⁰

The Soviet recognition that it is the Western view of war as the end of politics that undermines the political preparation of the population is shown in a statement quoted earlier: "There is profound error and harm in the *disorienting* claims of bourgeois ideologues that there will be no victor in a thermonuclear world war"³¹ (emphasis added).

Once a realist leader or coalition is in place nationally (or regionally if the country is broken up), several actions possibly would proceed as rapidly as possible. First, an internal police force would be recruited and put to work "maintaining peace." Second, foreign assistance would be welcomed, and perhaps even requested, to assist in directing recovery. Such assistance probably would come from elements of internal police and military intelligence from Soviet and East European countries. Military forces for this purpose might well be landed in selected areas. Third, the KGB list of leaders and their categorization would dictate certain actions. Hawks, military scientists, and industrialists whose presence or actions would be considered detrimental to "peace and social progress" probably would be dealt with quickly and without mercy. Stalin's "joke" at Teheran in 1943 that "fifty thousand German officers must be shot summarily at the end of the war"³² might well pale in comparison to actions that might be undertaken in the wake of a world nuclear war against the imperialists who, by definition, unleashed the war. Incurables might be tried publicly as war criminals and immediately executed. Some might simply disappear. Many might be transported to the Soviet Gulag as *mea culpa* volunteers to assist with the rebuilding of the Soviet Union.* This type of

*One example of this can be seen in the following description of such a plan's possible application in a European context:

The second wave will occupy and clear the terrain and make logistic preparations for the invasion of France, the Benelux countries, and England. If Russia is reserving the role of invader of France for itself exclusively, it is for a very simple reason. Under no circumstances does it want to run the risk of "fraternization" between the French and Czech, Polish, Hungarian, or Romanian armies. The commander of occupied France is already, on paper, the present Russian commander on the Carpathian front. The mayors, civilian administrators, judges,

massive deportation has been practiced on numerous occasions by the Soviets when they have seized control of new territories. One instance is described in *The Russian Secret Police*:

Eastern Poland, the most populous of the new areas, was also the first to suffer—to the total, according to one estimate, of about 1,200,000 deported. . . . About 200,000 persons were also deported from Bessarabia in 1941, as were a similar number from the Baltic countries. Here mass arrests began on 6 June 1941, within less than three weeks of Hitler's invasion of the USSR, and could not be completed.

Despite its relatively modest scale, the Baltic deportation is particularly instructive to the student of NKVD/NKGB methods, since many of the relevant secret operation orders have become available to Western scholars. Directed by Ivan Serov, Deputy Commissar of the security police and the great Soviet expert in deportation, the round-up was systematically planned in all its details. The lists of those selected for removal were drawn up in secret beforehand, being based on reports by spies.³⁵

As these actions progressed, repatriations might be initiated. The remaining U.S. industrial resources would be put to Soviet use. Many might be relocated to the Soviet Union. Others might be used in place with the output shipped according to Soviet

police officials, and political commissars the occupation army will establish have already been chosen, and they are all Russians.

All this has been planned in detail. The Warsaw Pact has at present already printed millions of documents, tickets, ration cards, posters, and orders of the day for use in all of the German, French, and Swiss towns it will occupy. The Russians have an up-to-date list of 10,000 persons their troops will be ordered to arrest in Germany on the first day of the war. In each Russian unit, in Czechoslovakia, Poland, and the German Democratic Republic, there are already military courts established whose mission will be to accompany the front-line troops and to try the future "war criminals" on the spot. The French list has already been drawn up. It includes tens of thousands of names of politicians, general council members, mayors, military officers, businessmen, trade union leaders, journalists, and representatives, in general, of the bourgeois system. Naturally, the judges and their assistants are Russian.³³

Although this assertion may seem outlandish to some and likely is impossible to prove, the Soviets do stress the need in peacetime to carefully study and "prepare" probable theaters of war. Further, they state that this "involves the establishment of a *definite legal regime* under which in time of war the military command is granted rights and *broad authority* in relation not only to those in the military service, but also to the civilian population which lives in the theater area."³⁴ (Emphasis added)

desires. The Soviet rape of Eastern Europe following its liberation after the Great Patriotic War might well be an example of their plans for the United States.

Throughout this entire process, some form of military authority would also be present. Two possibilities are obvious. First, indirect presence through the use of weapons of mass destruction—nuclear and chemical—against communities that are judged to be unsalvageable, both to eliminate them and to provide examples, is possible, as noted above. Second, conventional military forces might be used, much as they were in Hungary (1956) and Czechoslovakia (1968). The likelihood of this latter course would depend on a number of factors, including the availability of such forces following the nuclear battle and the immediate need or demand for their presence elsewhere, e.g., in the Soviet Union to assist with recovery, on the Chinese border to maintain its integrity, or in Western Europe or the Middle East to maintain control and direct salvage operations.

In this regard, actual military invasion of the United States might be an important element of Soviet strategic planning. Exactly when such an invasion operation would be undertaken, how it would be staged, and what the force and transport requirements would be is unclear. Soviet transport capability to implement such an operation today would appear to be rather limited. On the other hand, such an operation could, perhaps, be phased over several weeks. Further, the required magnitude of the initial effort and any subsequent buildup would undoubtedly be a function of the nature of the prior Soviet attacks and would be affected by the extent of disorganization and the possibility of *de jure* or *de facto* capitulation, the available revolutionary elements in place, and the effectiveness of the U.S. response and the resulting damage to the Soviet Union. The capability required, although not in existence at this time, could be a long-range goal toward which the Soviets may begin shifting efforts when higher priority force developments are completed. The buildup of long-range air transport capabilities and of the navy and the large merchant marine fleet may be relevant indicators to watch.

In summary, the destruction of capitalism as a form of government and the installation of governments favorable to the development of Soviet communism are seen as prerequisites of com-

plete victory. The destruction of an enemy's military forces and potential and the seizure of strategic areas are means to facilitate these ends. Hence, consideration of occupation and control appears to enter into the planning of the war effort from the beginning, and this appears to apply to the Soviet strategy for fighting an intercontinental as well as a continental war.

The purpose of this discussion is not to argue that such occupation is necessarily part of current Soviet plans, or to argue that they now have the capability to occupy and control the United States, or to suggest that the task would even be practicable immediately following a nuclear battle. Rather, the point is that occupation and control are an integral part of Soviet strategy and that, therefore, this possibility should not be as lightly addressed or ignored by the United States as it is now and has been in the past. The Soviet scenario for global nuclear war is not the Western scenario where, following a nuclear exchange, both sides retreat homeward to lick their wounds and begin the long and arduous task of recovery in isolation from the rest of the world.

Ideological Conversion

The final condition of victory is ideological conversion. Obviously, achieving this is not a short-term proposition. "In armed struggle," according to *Problems of Contemporary War*,

a situation of hopelessness and no way out is created for one of the sides, and it is forced to submit to another's will by force. However, [according to Lenin], "In war it is possible to win in several months, but it is impossible to win culturally in such a time frame. Here we need a longer period by the very nature of things, and we must adapt to this longer period by calculating our work and displaying the greatest persistence, insistence, and systematic character."³⁶

Ending the War

In the U.S. literature, war termination has increasingly been recognized as the major end objective of the U.S. use of force in a

war effort, although concrete objectives or methods suggested for achieving such termination are scarce. In the Soviet literature, no end objective other than victory has been identified. The closest analog to Western notions of war termination appears in the Soviet literature on local wars, with most emphasis placed on a European conflict. In these discussions, the Soviets recognize that one major problem for military science is limiting a local war to the region in which it breaks out and preventing its escalation to global nuclear war. This basic theme has been encountered in several places and over several years, as, for example, in Sokolovskiy's *Military Strategy* and in a mid-1960s critique by Lieutenant Colonel Rybkin of a Soviet book on limited war. The book under review suggested that local wars initiated by the capitalists have as their goal the undermining of the strength of the world system of socialism and, further, that such wars can become worldwide nuclear war very quickly. These are both common propaganda themes in the Soviet literature, and it would appear that the book was a published expression of those themes. Rybkin's criticism of these premises is particularly illuminating:

In the first place not every local war has the aim of directly undermining the world system of socialism. The imperialists conduct the majority of such wars against the national liberation movement. This, of course, indirectly damages the social camp insofar as it is a blow against the united front of progressive forces.

In the second place, historical experience has shown that only two local wars have turned into world wars. . . . The author says further that "it is entirely possible" that the aggressor will use nuclear weapons in a local war. This is a correct statement, but again it is doubtful that this would "immediately" turn the war into a world war. In any case, it is in the interests of the Soviet Union and of all progressive mankind to put an end to the local war or to limit it and defeat the aggressor with limited forces. Solving this problem is one of the important tasks in developing military theory in its present stage.³⁷

This, however, does not imply that the Soviets do not focus on the postwar world, only that their approach appears to be different from that of most Western nations. In the West, the

focus tends to be on the end of the war as an *event*; in the Soviet Union, the focus is on the politics of the postwar world:

Politics determines the *priority* and strength of the blows inflicted on the enemy, the measures taken to strengthen allied relations within the coalition and the general strategic plan of the war, which is directed at the quickest possible rout of the enemy or at a drawn-out struggle and the gradual exhaustion of the enemy's forces. At the same time politics, by taking into account the strategic possibilities at its disposal, must determine the speed and the intensity of the military actions, and also the forces and means it is necessary to mobilize in order to attain the aims intended, etc. In doing so politics takes into account not only the aims of war but also those of the post-war settlement and subordinates the conduct of the war to the attainment of these aims.³⁸ (Emphasis in original)

The politics of the winner are seen as determining the politics of the postwar world, modified by the physical changes (e.g., in the balance of power) that resulted from the war. The Soviet objective in both peace and war, as is discussed below, is clearly to achieve superiority over the enemy (capitalism)³⁹ and, in the event of war, to dictate the terms of peace. In fact, some experts argue that the Soviets cannot even accept the concept of bargaining for war termination because to do so would suggest, first, that they would be willing to share responsibility for the determination of their future and, secondly, that once in a war they would be willing to settle for less than fulfillment of their objectives. The Soviet concern with "ending the war" is focused not on war termination but on "victorious termination."

CHAPTER IV

Phases of the War in Soviet Military Thought

THE SOVIETS DIVIDE global nuclear war into three phases: a period of threat; a beginning or initial period of the war itself; and second or subsequent periods of the war. Most of the Soviet discussion of and approach to global nuclear war is organized within this framework.

The Period of Threat

The period of threat or preinitial period, as distinct from everyday preparations for future military conflict, is defined as "a period of direct preparation of a country and its armed forces for war," begun "by decision of the government in moments of especially tense international situation."¹ Grounds for declaring a threat situation include a change or strain in political interrelationships, an outbreak of local conflict, the introduction of civil defense measures by an opponent, or a rise in the combat readiness of armed forces by an opponent. The normal duration of this period of threat appears to be in the neighborhood of a week, although it is seen to vary from as little as a few hours to as much as a few weeks.

This concept suggests that, in general, the Soviets do not expect a surprise, out-of-the-blue attack from the United States. This should not be misconstrued to mean that such a surprise attack by the West is not of concern to the Soviets. Quite the contrary, the primary assumption underlying the Soviet approach to combat readiness is the possibility of a surprise attack:

The danger of nuclear world war is now connected not only with a possible sudden attack by the imperialists on the socialist camp as a whole but also with the possibility that a local conflict will develop into a world war.²

This is a basic point of Soviet military doctrine:

Soviet military doctrine proceeds from the standpoint that if the imperialists unleash another world war, it may begin with a surprise nuclear attack by the imperialist powers against the socialist nations or may escalate from a local conflict.³

Surprise, as is expanded upon below, is regarded in the Soviet literature as a vital if not the single most important condition for success in war:

A more important condition for achieving victory than overall superiority in weapons and manpower is the ability to use concealment in preparing one's main forces for a major strike and the element of surprise in launching an attack against important enemy targets.⁴

Hence, it is assumed by the Soviets that both sides will attempt to achieve surprise when the situation calls for war. However, the Soviets expect that there will be a period when the surprise attack is in preparation. Determining the onset of that preparatory period—that is, the beginning of the “period of threat”—is considered an especially important military task, since correct determination of that can eliminate the surprise:

Under present-day conditions one of the most important tasks of military leaders is timely determination of the onset of a period of threat immediately preceding the outbreak of hostilities and an enemy nuclear missile attack.⁵

The impact on Soviet military doctrine and strategy of the German Barbarossa attack is unmistakable. A repeat of the same mistake in the nuclear age is seen as likely to spell defeat. As explained in 1964 by Marshal Biryuzov in an analysis of the lessons to be learned from the initial period of the Great Patriotic

War, a state that becomes complacent toward the possibility of surprise attack will suffer much destruction from the very outset or will quickly lose the war:

The employment of qualitatively new weapons for waging armed battle will create conditions in a future war for the achievement of results in its beginning period which cannot compare with the results of the beginning period of the past war. The first nuclear strike can immediately lead to the disorganization of the government, military control, and the whole rear area of a country and to stopping the systematic deployment of the armed forces and all measures being conducted for mobilization. All of this will have a telling effect on the operation of armed forces deployed in theaters of military operations. The results of the first days of military operations may have a decisive influence on the subsequent course of a war.⁶

And, as reiterated in a subsequent *Voyennaya mysl'* article:

In view of the immense destructive force of nuclear weapons and the extremely limited time available to take effective counter-measures after an enemy launches its missiles, the launching of the first massed nuclear attack acquires decisive importance for achieving the objectives of war.⁷

Acting upon the determination that an attack is about to be made, i.e., seizing the initiative and preempting, is a major Soviet objective. According to *Methodological Problems of Military Theory and Practice*, an important text prepared by officers from the Lenin Political Military Academy:

It is especially important to fight for possession of the initiative, which under contemporary conditions becomes the most important element in the combat efficiency of the forces. The forces which have the initiative obtain a great deal of freedom of choice in the realization of the capabilities at the same time that the enemy is forced to adapt to the side with the initiative. Under modern conditions, with consideration of a number of other factors, initiative can to a considerable degree predetermine the entire subsequent course of an armed struggle.⁸

The People, the Army, the Commander reiterates the importance of correctly determining the onset of the period of threat as well as utilizing this determination by seizing the initiative:

The period of threat is the period of the aggressor's direct preparations for an attack. A most important task of the military leadership is prompt determination of the onset of this period and the taking of immediate effective steps to repulse a surprise enemy attack.⁹

In analyzing the period of threat prior to World War II, the Soviets indicate a conceptual breakdown of the period of threat into two phases: the first, a more general threat period (in the World War II case, starting when Germany seized Austria in 1938); the second, more applicable to the present era, an immediately threatening period, which itself has two stages—"concealed and open."¹⁰ During the concealed stage, direct preparation is carried out secretly. Because of the great importance attached to surprise in beginning a war, the Soviets emphasize that the threat period activities of the Soviet Union are to be conducted as covertly as possible; they write of the need for covert mobilization¹¹ and of the use of training and exercise maneuvers to cover real preparations (e.g., Czechoslovakia, 1968). The open stage, which directly precedes the start of the war, is to be of "the utmost brevity" and appears to start when "preparations are discovered, the international situation becomes heated to the limit, and war becomes inevitable."¹²

In reviewing various initial periods of wars throughout history, Soviet analyses have concluded that there was always some "warning," but that effective "surprise" still was accomplished, sometimes as a result of disinformation directed at the single crucial individual who had to act before others could take effective action in response to the warning or, alternatively, by repeating maneuvers until the threatened party was desensitized to the possibility that this time the maneuver was a real attack. The Soviets recognize that complete surprise in the sense of eliminating all warning indicators is practically impossible given today's sophisticated intelligence apparatus. At the same time, however, there is an opinion that "the capabilities for disclosing

an attack being prepared are sharply decreased at the present time and that the probability of achieving surprise is increased, and we agree with this."¹³ What is behind this apparent contradiction or inconsistency is not known and should be the subject of more detailed examination. The importance of surprise and of striking first in a nuclear war is clear:

Mass nuclear missile strikes at the armed forces of the opponent and at his key economic and political objectives can determine the victory of one side and the defeat of the other at the very beginning of the war. Therefore, a correct estimate of the elements of the supremacy over the opponent and the ability *to use them before the opponent does*, are the key to victory in such a war.¹⁴ (Emphasis added)

During the period of threat, Soviet efforts are designed both to prepare forces for the war that is expected and to initiate mobilization of the economy:

The need for achieving military superiority over enemies, and for victory in the event of a nuclear missile war, imparts special importance to the economic flexibility of any given state (or coalition of states), which must be able to effect a rapid transition of the entire economy to a wartime footing at the onset of the critical prewar period, introducing mass production of the latest means of armed struggle at the outbreak of hostilities, and maintaining the ability to fulfill the economic needs of army and people during the war itself.¹⁵

Because there is always some threat and, in the Soviet view, a constant struggle between the two systems and because the only way to win is to be better prepared to launch and win a war at any time, preparation for that war to some extent goes on constantly; over the long run the Soviet military and economic structures are close to war mobilization levels. However, the term "period of threat" as used in the Soviet literature is a specific, defined time period and the "transition of the entire economy to a wartime footing" involves specific, predefined preparations.

Accompanying the internal preparatory actions throughout all stages of the period of threat and increasing right up to the final hour, the Soviets can be expected to undertake active measures

specifically intended to deceive or mislead the United States and forestall any efforts by the United States to increase its own readiness. Both diplomatic and nondiplomatic efforts are considered appropriate, not only to produce constant evaluations of U.S. political and military readiness for war but also to deceive the United States and to disrupt its decision-making capability. Diplomatic efforts are not considered outside the strategy of war but rather an integral part of that strategy:

With the outbreak of war all means of policymaking are directed towards victory, towards achieving the political aims of the war. They are not achieved by the armed forces alone. Economic and ideological struggle, open and secret diplomacy, and other forms of struggle, are used not only to further the armed struggle but also to supplement it, and in aggregate with it they are able to break the will of the enemy to resist, and thus secure victory. These are all means of waging war, its component parts.¹⁶

Although official diplomatic efforts would emphasize a real-time appraisal of the situation developing in the United States, they would also include spreading false information and "lobbying" those in power. Specific individuals, especially the president and other influential political and social leaders, would be the targets of an intensive disinformation effort. (Consider, for example, the Gromyko-Kennedy talks on the eve of the Cuban missile crisis.)¹⁷

Aggressive efforts to raise all the horrors of nuclear war in the minds of the people and the Congress can also be expected, possibly even to the point of attempting to instigate a revolution:

Today, the influence of the general populace on foreign policy has also become stronger in developed capitalist states. Governing circles in the U.S., Britain, France, Japan, Italy, and other countries, have had to reckon with the popular will and with the people's aspirations for peace. . . .

The communist and workers' parties of capitalist countries are mobilizing the masses to solve pressing foreign policy problems, to curb aggressors, to preserve peace, and to strengthen international security. These parties' efforts are directed toward rallying the masses and toward ensuring that they are organized, socially conscious, and activated. . . .

That it is possible to prevent war in our epoch is due to the potency of the socialist camp and to the persistent pacifist campaign being conducted, on the one hand, by the peoples of the young developing states, and on the other hand, by the peoples of imperialist states, who are disrupting with increasing frequency the aggressive intrigues of the governing circles. Also opposed to nuclear missile warfare is a certain segment of the capitalist bourgeoisie, which has soberly estimated the catastrophic consequences of another world war. . . .

Under contemporary conditions, when the forces of reaction are trying to aggravate the international situation and threatening mankind with an annihilating war, the working class has a special responsibility for preserving peace. Through massive lobbying, it can have a substantial influence on the governments and parliaments of capitalist countries, thus disrupting the aggressive intrigues of the imperialist bourgeoisie.¹⁸

The "social consequences" of nuclear war, according to a 1969 discussion in *Voyennaya mysl'*, "must be known by the people in order that they direct their efforts toward promptly restraining the imperialists and depriving them of the possibility of putting their lethal weapons into operation."¹⁹ Both within and outside the United States, disinformation schemes and efforts would likely be directed at various organizations and media, e.g., radio, television, and newspapers, to promote a popular movement that would operate to the disadvantage of the government during a crisis.

The Soviets have focused considerable research attention on group psychology and recognize the latent potential inherent in a crisis situation. In a recent Soviet text concerned with the problems of nuclear war, they touch on the issue as follows:

In 1961, in connection with the so-called "Berlin crisis," a campaign to construct atomic fallout shelters was conducted . . . newspapers, magazines, radio, and television . . . deafened Americans with hysterical cries: "Run from the Red missiles!," "If you want to live—build fallout shelters!," "Buy radiation-protection suits!," "Your children will die if you do not save them from Soviet atomic bombs!" The country was seized by panic.²⁰

Although similar statements in the Soviet press relating to the Cuban missile crisis have not been identified in this study, the run on emergency food rations, shotguns and rifles, and the development of picket lines, demonstrations, and protest rallies against President Kennedy's position²¹ cannot have gone unnoticed. Of particular interest should be the activities at that time of various peace organizations. For example, the Student Peace Union called for 15,000 members to march in Washington in a demonstration against the U.S. blockade.*²³

Of special note are the calls for the United States to submit the issue to the United Nations rather than undertake unilateral actions (e.g., from Professor H. Stuart Hughes of Harvard University, Norman Thomas, and Linus Pauling).²⁴ Peace initiatives that recognize and capitalize on such social movements as these during a crisis might well be used by the Soviet Union as cover and deception associated with plans to begin preparations for a surprise attack, as the Soviets did in the case of Finland in 1940²⁵ (see chapter 7). In the case of Cuba, however, not only did these peace initiatives appear to have no impact, but President Kennedy led the initiative and effectively used the United Nations to the U.S. advantage. Although the precise logic behind his moves in this regard may never be known, his personal experience with these "peace" movements and initiatives following the Soviet abrogation of the nuclear test moratorium the previous year are worth recalling:

In August of that year (1961) Khrushchev savagely shattered the nuclear test moratorium with a sixty-megaton monster blast. Washington confidently sat back expecting worldwide protest demonstrations. It got a rude shock: the protest demonstrations came only when President Kennedy began pondering whether American security required new tests. As a result, the President appointed his brother, Robert F. Kennedy, to head a cabinet-level study of the problem of subversion and the American tools of statecraft.²⁶

*Other organizations similarly directed, as reported in the *New York Times*, include Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Women Strike for Peace, New York Committee for a General Strike for Peace, Young Socialist Alliance, National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy, and the Committee for Non-Violent Action.²²

The notion of using both external and internal forces to foment revolution and bring about a change in government on the eve of a war or to establish an "acceptable" leftist movement that could take over the government following an initial nuclear exchange has appeared in Soviet writings and might well be a Soviet tactic that would be applied wherever the situation was considered susceptible to that type of action:

Under conditions of a sharp conflict, crisis situation which war engenders, the proletariat and all revolutionary elements in society have the particularly responsible duty to carry out a revolution, to overthrow the bourgeoisie, to take power into their own hands.

With all the inconsistency of the pacifists, their campaign against nuclear war constitutes an important social factor which cannot be discounted.²⁷

Indeed, such a tactic would be consistent with and might well be integrated within the Soviet concept, discussed in chapter 3, of ultimate occupation. That is, an assumption of power by forces friendly to the Soviet Union might result in an "invitation" for Soviet assistance to aid in governing the United States.

Such a propaganda effort can also be expected to be mounted in certain allied and important third world nations:

However hard military figures and theorists of aggressor states try to discredit popular armed struggle, one thing is clear: if the imperialists do unleash another war, it will evoke a massive partisan movement and other forms of armed resistance in their rear. . . .

A partisan movement by the general populace is also quite possible in a country used by an aggressor state to accommodate its troops, military bases, and combat equipment. The people of such a country will not be indifferent to the fact that their territory and material resources are being used by imperialists.²⁸

War, ideology, and propaganda are conjoined in the Soviet view:

As for the ideological struggle, in conditions of nuclear war, especially in the period preceding decisive nuclear operations of the combatants, as well as in its concluding period, it will be con-

ducted through all possible channels and in the most active forms. The war itself is a competition of the spirit, ideas, world outlook, ideologies, and moral stability of the personnel of the armed forces and the population of the country.

The point of our ideological struggle, on the one hand, will be directed above all toward exposing the predatory goals of the right-wing circles of aggressive states and depriving them of faith on the part of the peoples of the dependent and neutral countries, and on the other hand, toward increasing the moral-combat qualities of the personnel of the armed forces and mobilizing the entire population of the country for resolutely repulsing the enemy and increasing in every way possible the level of material production.²⁹

Given the existence of communist groups in some other countries, such tactics might well be more successful in areas other than the United States.

On the military side, the major force preparations and maneuvers undertaken by the Soviets during a period of threat, as they themselves make clear, would be those required, on the one hand, to increase the readiness of all forces and, on the other hand, to increase their survivability. These maneuvers, according to the Soviets, can involve "large groupings of strategic rocket troops, the Air Force, PVO Strany troops, naval forces, and ground troops."³⁰ This might well have considerable impact on U.S. strategic and NATO theater nuclear force targeting. Consider, for example, PVO Strany (national air defense) capabilities, which one would expect to be among the first targets struck in the war. If a substantial segment of these forces were to change position and through use of cover, camouflage, and radio deception (generation of false radar and radio signals) mask their new locations, the air penetration problems might be made substantially more difficult. Changes of position and subsequent masking efforts might be accomplished either prior to initiation of the conflict or during its course. These possibilities are raised in a 1968 *Voyennaya mysl'* article, "The Maneuver of National Antiair Defense (PVO Strany) Forces":

As is well known, the PVO Strany [domestic (fixed) target air defense (as opposed to PVO units attached to combat units)] troop

grouping, in contrast to the voyskovaya PVO [combat unit air defense], is of a rather stable nature, and the bulk of forces are massed to cover the most important areas. The enemy, however, is relatively free in choice of direction and target of air attack. For this reason events may so develop during the course of repulsing an air attack that the PVO manpower and equipment deployment prior to the attack will not sufficiently meet the current situation. It will be necessary to beef up defenses in certain areas or around certain targets; at the same time some covered targets will lose their importance, and a PVO troop grouping may be broken up as a result of missiles strikes or enemy air attacks. As a consequence of this, PVO Strany troops, during the course of combat against aerial attack should be constantly prepared to regroup and redeploy their personnel and equipment. A skillful maneuver may play a decisive role in gaining victory in combat and in carrying out two PVO tasks.

The primary objectives of PVO Strany troop redeployments may be the following: concentration of effort in the main path of enemy air attack in order to cause maximum damage to the enemy and afford better protection of major targets; restoration of combat capability to a grouping depleted or disrupted by enemy strikes; antiaircraft cover for military air transports when flying through a PVO unit's defense zone; bridging the gap between PVO Strany troops and voyskovaya PVO which may be created during the course of military advance, and organization of the defense of new targets (areas). A maneuvering action may also have the objective of removing PVO troops from under the brunt of attack. Maneuvering action can also secure optimal deployment of PVO forces for continuous interdiction during the entire course of a bombing mission (when missions are flown against targets far to the rear).³¹

Surprise is again an important aspect of maneuvers:

Surprise and maneuver are closely interconnected. On the one hand the maneuver is a means of achieving surprise, and on the other surprise creates the optimal conditions for successful maneuver execution. In order to execute effective strikes against an enemy in the air it is essential to take all steps to conceal the maneuver (camouflage, fake troop movements and operations, dummy targets, etc.). The scale and types of measures executed

for the purpose of keeping the enemy unaware of a maneuver are directly dependent on the quantity and composition of personnel and equipment participating in the maneuver.³²

This maneuver would include not only deployed forces, but reserve elements as well:

Antiaircraft missile troop reserve can in our opinion be established only in large antiaircraft groupings by assignment of the most highly-mobile antiaircraft missile units and subunits. These units and subunits should be fully set up for immediate action or movement to a new area.³³

Another especially important maneuver would be the massive dispersal of submarines and aircraft. In line with this, it is quite possible that there would be a simultaneous effort to cover such activity and deceive the enemy's national intelligence technical collection capabilities through the use of decoys ("dummy targets") designed to camouflage this activity. The use of mock-ups of submarines and aircraft to hide their actual dispersal should be expected. Two approaches to decoys mentioned in *Voyennaya mysl'* are "inflatable rubber boats or collapsible wooden boats."³⁴ In fact, the national intelligence technical collection capabilities (e.g., space-, air-, ground-, and sea-based photographic and electronic intelligence capabilities) likely would be carefully assessed by the Soviets as a potential conduit of the highest credibility, and the information received from them least subject to scrutiny within the United States because of their assumed *unbiased* reporting. Thus, these methods might be used to send false information to the United States for the purpose of deceiving national leaders. Although there would likely be an intensive, overt, active attack on reconnaissance, command and control, and communications assets at the very beginning of the war, as is discussed in chapter 6, the benefits to be obtained by covert deception techniques directed against these means during the period of threat in order to enhance the element of surprise is obviously recognized, as is indicated in a 1968 *Voyennaya mysl'* article, "Modern Warfare and Surprise Attack," which discusses

an attack on command, control, communications, and intelligence:

We should also consider the circumstances whereby for the purpose of deception, an aggressor might resort to the use of such methods of operations which do not produce the end result [that is, destruction] in complete form, but insure a higher level of probability of achievement of surprise.³⁵

The Initial Period of the War

The beginning of the actual war itself is the start of the "initial period of the war" phase. In the early 1960s the Soviets appear to have concluded that

it would be most correct from the scientific point of view to use the achievement of determined or, more precisely, the most immediate strategic goals of the war as a basis for determining the content and duration of the beginning period of the war.³⁶

This thought was subsequently incorporated into their dictionary of basic military terms, which describes the initial period of the war as that period "ranging from the outbreak of hostilities to attainment of the short-term strategic goals assigned to the first strategic echelon of the country's armed forces."³⁷ Although the actual duration of the initial period of the war is impossible to establish, in the mid-sixties the Soviets stated "with complete certainty" that it will not be measured in months but probably "in several days or at most weeks."³⁸ Over the years, the Soviets have focused considerable attention on the initial period of the war. As noted above, they believe that this period can be decisive and can determine the outcome of the war—that is, the initial period "determines" how the war will be won; this does not imply the actual winning of the war during this period, although under the most favorable circumstances, the goals of the war can be attained early.

The most important immediate strategic mission in this period is the gaining of clear and dominant superiority in nuclear forces:

Creating the advantage over the enemy in this weapon [nuclear] and methods of its use is the most important task in the building up of the armed forces in peacetime as well as during the course of a war.³⁹

The most important and decisive factor is the question of which side will be able to achieve both a quantitative and qualitative preponderance of forces over those of the adversary.⁴⁰

Included as particularly important qualitative aspects are moral-political factors, command organization, means of control and support (e.g., reconnaissance), as well as the technical capabilities of armament and military equipment.⁴¹ The objectives of destruction of the enemy forces and of gaining clear and dominant superiority—a preponderance of nuclear strength—are accomplished through the initial mass nuclear strike. This initial nuclear strike is designed to change the correlation of forces decisively to the Soviet advantage, and, indeed, the time of the strike is referred to as the time to change the correlation of forces:

Most important in a military leader's foresight is his ability to detect the basic tendencies in the development of an armed struggle. This permits him to foretell with the required accuracy the moment when the correlation of forces should be changed.⁴²

The principal weight of this attack would be counternuclear; however, as indicated earlier, an attack against the enemy nuclear capability is not merely an attack on nuclear weapons but includes their associated command, control, reconnaissance, and ground support means. This combination is defined as the active targets.⁴³ In addition, other particularly important time-sensitive targets that would significantly impede Soviet operations in the initial period of the war would also be struck, along with the passive targets deemed important for destroying military potential and for moral and political disintegration.

Although considerable stress is placed in the Soviet literature on the concept of the simultaneous, mass strike, it should not be inferred from this that the Soviets think only or even principally in terms of one massive blow at the beginning of the war. Quite

the contrary, the Soviets see the war as proceeding in a phased fashion, where missions are performed in accordance with the priorities accorded them. As indicated earlier, the initial period of the war is even described as extending only until the *short-term* strategic goals have been attained.⁴⁴ Hence, the Soviets talk of first strike and subsequent strikes⁴⁵ and of sequences of strikes and sequences or "series of strategic missions"⁴⁶ rather than of a simultaneous all-at-once strike:

A battle, an operation, and even more, a war cannot be reduced to one act of destruction of the enemy; they must be planned in any event as a series of consecutive strikes, each of which is different in its nature.⁴⁷

As a further example, in the context of defining a U.S. attack, consider the following quotation from a *Voyennaya mys'* article on air defense operations:

The first strike with which an aerial-space operation begins should be inflicted with the largest number of missiles and aircraft, and the subsequent strikes, with the forces retained in accordance with the degree of their readiness and the necessity of destroying objectives.⁴⁸

In this same context, Figure 1 presents what appears to be a first-order approximation describing a missile exchange model in a scenario where the United States launches first. The purpose of the model in this case is to examine optimal times of combat readiness, which is "meaningful only in the case of the delivery of a retaliatory attack."⁴⁹

The distribution density depicted for the Soviet (Side B) launches indicates that in this scenario, in which the United States (Side A) launches first, the first Soviet launch is a launch on warning. The figure clearly reflects sequencing of strikes, and the related text indicates that in this case (i.e., a Soviet response) it is desirable to shift as many firings as possible from the second launch to the first in order to maximize survivability.

The figure also suggests what might be an important Soviet tactic, namely, to cease activities and "button up" during that period of time when salvos of nuclear strikes are expected to arrive and detonate. This would be logical because that is when

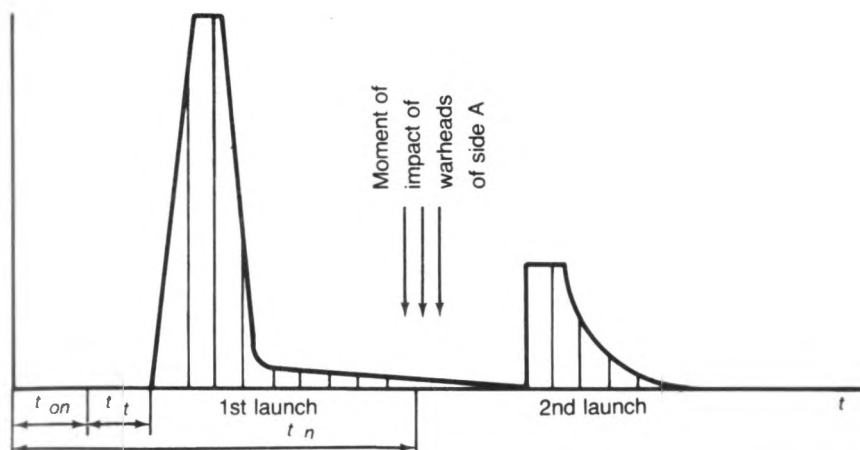


FIGURE 1

SOVIET MODEL OF THE CHARACTER OF THE DISTRIBUTION DENSITY OF
MISSILES LAUNCHED BY SIDE B
(the Soviet Union).

SOURCE: V. I. Varfolomeyev and M. I. Kopytov, *Design and Testing of Ballistic Missiles—USSR*, trans. Joint Publications Research Service, JPRS-51810 (Washington, D.C.: JPRS, November 19, 1970), p. 305.

the missiles, and especially their guidance systems, are most vulnerable, in particular to electromagnetic interference caused by detonating weapons. Thus, the Soviet warning system would likely have two tasks: detecting the launch of a U.S. attack and forecasting for the Soviet Strategic Missile Force the span of time during which missiles should not be launched. At the same time, the Soviets can be expected to apply or at least examine the potential of applying the concept in reverse, that is, in designing their attack on U.S. missile sites. Thus, they would almost certainly include in their planning an understanding of the vulnerability of U.S. missiles to the electromagnetic pulse generated by the detonating Soviet weapons. This is suggested by the following quote from a Soviet article discussing a U.S. Air Force Association conference on the vulnerabilities of U.S. strategic missiles:

A considerable threat to the intercontinental ballistic missiles are powerful nuclear explosions set off at great altitudes, because the impulses of electromagnetic energy created by such explosions can put out of commission not only the on-board missile

equipment, but also the ground electronic equipment of the launch complexes.⁵⁰

The phasing of launches may also be responsive to a certain degree of flexibility in the way the war can start and hence in the sequence in which objectives are to be destroyed, as is pointed out with reference to medium-range missiles in the following:

Changes in the sequence of destruction of objectives are also not excluded. Thus, a strike by medium-range missiles can be inflicted first against such objectives as large military-industrial and administrative centers. However, as a means which is closer to enemy objectives, they can be used above all for a strike against antimissile and anti-air defense means and control posts in order from the very beginning to deprive the state subjected to attack of the capability of defense. Other variants are also quite probable.⁵¹

The sequential nature of the attack has three very different dimensions. First, the sequential performance of strategic missions refers to the fact that the first missions performed are the major political and military-strategic missions that are time urgent and determine the course of the war as a whole. Following this, subsequent missions (e.g., assault, occupation) are accomplished. In this example, the first mission(s) would take hours to days to perform and the subsequent ones, days to months.

Second, time-urgent missions themselves may of necessity have to be performed sequentially. A good example can be seen in the case of defeat of the enemy nuclear forces. The Soviets view this process as proceeding in two phases. The first and shortest phase involves the destruction of fixed capabilities (e.g., command/control and silo-based ICBMs) and the second and more prolonged phase, the destruction of mobile capabilities (SLBMs and long-range aviation). The Soviets recognize that because of expected force dispersal and associated target acquisition problems, a simultaneous strike that destroys all enemy nuclear forces in one decisive blow may be, for practical purposes, impossible, unless perhaps the enemy is caught completely by surprise and is completely unprepared. Rather, they expect that the first phase would take from several hours to a day to perform but that the

rest of the war against the enemy's nuclear means might well take several days or even a week to complete. This distinction is cited in referring to the battle against naval forces, for example:

Simultaneously with the infliction of nuclear strikes, a struggle will develop in the sea and ocean regions with the goal of destroying surface and underwater forces of the navy, as well as in the air for repulsing nuclear strikes of the enemy.⁵²

The concept of a "struggle" lasting some period of time is also reflected in the Soviet approach to examining the correlation of forces, in which such items as command and control and, of particularly great importance, reconnaissance are emphasized.

Third, within the framework of the first nuclear strike, sequencing is required because of a variety of factors, including the capacity of the command/control system, missile launch reliability and retargeting, fratricide and scheduling problems, air and missile coordination problems, and the need for special (both airborne and satellite) strategic reconnaissance to conduct post-strike assessment and determine the need for restrikes and/or retargeting. Here the individual "strikes" may more appropriately be referred to as salvos or launchings, since a "massed nuclear strike" (singular) or just "strike" (singular) is defined as "a large number of nuclear munitions delivered simultaneously or in quick succession."⁵³ The basis of a "strategic operation," on the other hand, is "the delivery of massed nuclear strikes" (plural).⁵⁴ The initial strike would be a strategic operation consisting of several massed strikes. The Soviets speak of several (three to four) such salvos in the initial strike, separated by as much as three to four hours, and the duration of the initial "strike" as a day or so. The first "strike" is therefore much more complex and involved than a single launching. Clearly, the "nature" of the attack is therefore unlikely to be discerned from the nature of the first launching, even if all the targets of that launching were perfectly known.

One aspect of the complexity of the initial mass nuclear strike is seen in the importance associated with command, control, and reconnaissance in the Soviet approach to directing the war. In brief, the problem is viewed as that of *managing* a nuclear

exchange in real time rather than merely pushing the button for a massive strike. This is also reflected in discussions in the Soviet military literature relating command/control to the need for flexibility. Flexibility is viewed as absolutely critical in the Soviet assessment of force capability. A key attribute of flexibility from the Soviet point of view involves the redirection or retargeting of nuclear strikes during the course of the conflict. For example, the modern content of maneuver in an offensive

is interpreted above all as an organizational and quick shift or redistribution of previously planned nuclear strikes of rocket troops and aircraft for the purpose of the decisive defeat of an opposing grouping of enemy troops, mainly a nuclear grouping, as well as the rapid transfer of forces and materiel for the purpose of creating the most favorable grouping of them for prompt and complete exploitation of the results of the use of weapons of mass destruction and completion of the defeat of the enemy.

... The chief content of strategic maneuver is the redirection of nuclear strikes and nuclear groupings for the fast and complete destruction of large enemy groupings and the achievement of strategic results.⁵⁵

Flexibility in Soviet strategy goes far beyond a mere increase in the number of options available to the political leadership before the war starts; rather, it includes flexibility both prior to and during the course of the war itself; that is, it is a concept of nuclear war battle management.

Second and Subsequent Periods of the War

Following the initial period are the second and subsequent periods of the war. These are the periods during which the longer-term goals of the war would be realized, after the nuclear battle itself has been won or, at least, "determined." These periods of the war appear to have received a great deal of attention following the conclusion in the mid-1960s that it might well be impossible to knock out of the war in one blow a nation that had considerable depth at its disposal and was prepared. We believe that aspects of planning for these periods are better

examined as part of the entire strategic planning effort, with the threat and initial periods considered as a subset or boundary condition of the broader and more extensive efforts. Although the totality of such strategic planning is beyond the scope of this discussion, notions of the effort and selected aspects of particular importance are discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V

Preparing for War—Strategic Planning

STRATEGIC PLANNING is described in the Soviet literature as planning for readiness to rebuff aggression and to conduct armed struggle. Marshal Sokolovskiy referred to strategic planning as the most important area of military strategy¹ and defined it as embracing the development of plans for—

1. the use of the armed forces in various categories of wars, rear security, and the mobilizational deployment of the armed forces (customarily called operational planning);
2. development of the armed forces and determining their composition for peace and wartime, updating armament and military equipment, the organizational structure, and methods for the combat application of strategic concepts used subsequently by military doctrine;
3. scientific studies and experimental design work for the purpose of defense;
4. development of a military economy, the mobilizational expansion of the country's entire economy, the maintenance of its stability under conditions of nuclear war and its rehabilitation after nuclear strikes by the enemy, and the organization of comprehensive civil defense.²

Thus, strategic planning encompasses those aspects of the military and the economy that enable the Soviet Union to fight well beyond just the initial period. Four particular aspects of strategic planning that are of special interest are the types and quantity of

forces, reserve nuclear forces, mobilization of the economy, and civil defense.

Types and Quantity of Forces

Achieving and maintaining strategic nuclear superiority appear to be primary goals of Soviet military force development. According to the primary Soviet doctrinal reference text, *Marxism-Leninism on War and the Army*: "Now not only quantitative superiority, but also qualitative superiority over the opponent has become a matter of prime importance" (emphasis in original).³

This goal is both general and specific. One primary aspect is that of achieving "military-technical" superiority:

The basic condition for the proposed buildup of economic potential, effective economic mobilization, and the support of the war is now the achievement of military-technical superiority, which is understood to be superiority over the enemy in the quantity and quality of armaments and in the technical equipment of troops.⁴

Using the achievement of Soviet economics, sciences, and technology, the *party and state* are doing everything necessary to bring about our constant qualitative and quantitative military and technical superiority over the armies of the leading capitalist states.⁵ (Emphasis added)

And, more specifically: "No lags will be allowed in the military field: maintaining reliable military-technical superiority is a task conditioned by the international duties of the Soviet Union."⁶ As indicated, the task of achieving and maintaining military-technical superiority is not just a military one; "the party and state" are equally involved. The party, says General Yepishev, "constantly is concerned that the Soviet Army and Navy have military-technical superiority over the armed forces of our probable enemies, the imperialist aggressor states."⁷ And, quoting Brezhnev:

One can state without exaggeration that it is precisely this area, in the area of scientific-technical progress, that we find today one

of the principal arenas of struggle in the historical competition between the two systems. For our party this makes further intensive development of science and technology in the broad industrial application of the latest achievements of science and technology, not only a central economic but important political task as well. At the present stage, problems of scientific and technical progress are acquiring, quite frankly, decisive importance.⁸

The Soviet focus on military-technical superiority reflects their understanding that a strong, general technical and scientific base as well as technical advances in nonnuclear fields are indispensable for achieving and maintaining superiority. This, in turn, reflects the Soviet view that global nuclear war would involve all forces and resources of the country. Hence, superiority in areas other than nuclear forces is also vital ("no lags will be allowed in the military field . . .").

Notwithstanding this latter point, the decisive force component in the struggle for military-technical superiority is still considered the nuclear rocket weapon:

Thus superiority in nuclear-rocket weapons is the decisive factor of military-technical superiority. At the same time, conventional weapons, which likewise are being constantly improved, will also continue to play their part along with the latest combat equipment—rocket and nuclear.⁹

Moreover, in comparison with other military services, the Soviet Union's Strategic Missile Force (i.e., Strategic Rocket Troops), according to all three editions of Sokolovskiy's *Military Strategy*,

possess the highest degree of combat readiness and are able, in the shortest time, to destroy and demolish enormous numbers of objectives over wide areas and at any depth, and are capable of causing the enemy irretrievable losses, and in some cases forcing him to surrender. All this places Rocket Troops first among other services of the armed forces and requires constant attention to their development and improvement.

Regardless of whether Strategic Rocket Troops are an independent service of the armed forces, as in our country, or whether they are a component part of other services, as in the United States,

they have the main role in solving fundamental problems in a future war. Therefore, the creation and constant maintenance of quantitative and qualitative superiority over the enemy in this means of armed conflict and in methods of using it is one of the most important problems of the building of modern armed forces.¹⁰

Superiority is also stressed in the context of calculation of the correlation of forces. It is in this context that actual assessments appear to be carried out and that actual considerations of war enter in. "Calculating the correlation of forces," according to a 1969 *Voyennaya mysl'* article,

is not an end in itself. It is connected with many functions of strategic planning and the military-political leadership both during the prewar period as well as while a war is in progress. Obviously it is extremely important not only to establish the correlation of forces of the sides, but also on the basis of this to work out the most correct political and military decisions. From the established correlation of forces of the sides depend the elaboration of the plan for the war and for operations, the purposefulness of strategy and operational art, and the determination of ways to change this correlation to achieve victory in armed combat. Deficiencies in revealing the actual military capabilities of the sides lead, as experience shows, to a stratification of errors: the plans worked out for a war are unrealistic, instead of an offensive strategy a defensive strategy is used and vice versa, the military efforts are incorrectly distributed in regard to operational directions, time, etc.¹¹

Again, nuclear weapons are of primary importance in the calculation:

[Results depend] . . . on the presence and distribution of nuclear weapons among the various branches of the armed forces and the combat arms, on the power of the available nuclear warheads and the capabilities of their carriers, and the effectiveness of the systems for air defense and the control of troops.¹²

It is important to note here, in contrast to the manner in which the strategic balance is assessed in the West, the explicit inclusion

of air defense and command/control. This is often encountered in Soviet discussions of the correlation of forces, where both qualitative and quantitative factors are considered. The principal measure of the quantitative factors in the nuclear portion of the correlation is equivalent megatons, and the most important qualitative factors that enter into the calculation include assessments of command and control, reconnaissance, readiness, missile accuracy, survivability, and support factors, e.g., missile site refurbishing. This latter is particularly important as it may relate to the rationale for an possible existence of concealed reserve strategic nuclear forces.

Reserve Nuclear Forces

The Soviets traditionally organize their forces into three strategic echelons. Additionally, there are active forces and reserves. This differentiation does not apply merely to ground forces, as is often thought. It refers in the Soviet literature to all forces, e.g., air, air defense, and, most importantly to this discussion, to nuclear missiles of all categories—tactical, operational-tactical, and strategic. The various strategic echelons and the reserves are all considered important by the Soviets and are seen as playing distinctly different roles.

The first strategic echelon is manned at full strength (90 percent day-to-day), is fully equipped, and is to be ready for combat within a few hours or less in the case of the Strategic Missile Force Command. The second strategic echelon is manned at appreciably lower levels (as low as 20 percent overall and 50 percent for officers and critical personnel), is completely equipped insofar as combat vehicles, weapons, and munitions are concerned, and is to be prepared to complete mobilization and be ready for combat within a few days. The third strategic echelon is essentially unmanned, except for critical command elements that may be independently located or, in peacetime, possibly integrated into second or perhaps first strategic echelon units. At the onset of mobilization, these command personnel would split off and form units of the third strategic echelon, which is to be mobilized and combat ready within three weeks. All three strategic

echelons have reserves of both people and materiel. These reserves are used to replace losses and, additionally, to provide for the mobilization of the second and third strategic echelons.

The first strategic echelon is deployed and maintained at the highest level of combat readiness, is always on the alert and ready to repulse the enemy, and will be used to accomplish near-term strategic missions (e.g., the breakthrough or breakup and disruption of the enemy attack) that form the "short-term strategic goals" of the initial period of the war. (One dichotomy between Soviet strategy as written and force posture as observed is related to the readiness of the first strategic echelon of intercontinental forces. It is well recognized that these forces are kept in peacetime at a readiness level considerably below what is discussed as a requirement in the Soviet literature. This may reflect either the Soviet assumption that there will be a period of threat; a prioritizing of resource allocation; the current state of Soviet technology, e.g., the missile gyroscopes; or some combination of the above.)

The second echelon will be used to develop the success achieved by the first strategic echelon, to intensify the effort, and to replace elements of the first echelon that may be destroyed before they can perform their mission. As explained by Marshal S. S. Biryuzov in *Voyennaya mysl'* in 1964:

In the beginning of the war military operations will be conducted mainly by those armed forces which are combat ready. It is primarily these troops, the strategic nuclear arms, and the air defense troops who are entrusted with the responsibility for the execution of the most immediate strategic goals.

Of course measures will be taken in the beginning part of the war to reinforce these troops by deploying newly mobilized formations. They will form the second strategic echelon and will be entrusted with the execution of subsequent missions of the war.¹³

The third strategic echelon, which can be viewed as strategic reserves or which is constituted out of such reserves, has no immediate mission assigned to it and is an extra force for use by the Supreme High Command when and as necessary.¹⁴ The strategic reserves, as a generic category of forces, have a very special meaning to the Soviets. They are credited as a major factor in the

Soviet defeat of the Germans in the Great Patriotic War. The German failure to recognize the existence of the Soviet strategic reserves is represented by the Soviets as a critical error in German planning. These reserves are seen by the Soviets as having provided the superior correlation of forces that enabled them to defeat the Germans.¹⁵ The strategic reserves thus completed the victory. This is also the role assigned to nuclear reserves in contemporary warfare:

The increasing scale of armed conflict requires strong reserves for augmenting the efforts of the first strategic echelon which will hardly be in a position to execute alone the great number of important strategic missions in the path to achieving the goals of war.

Thus, to carry out modern armed conflict successfully it is necessary to have, in addition to a strong first echelon, strong and well-trained subsequent strategic echelons and the peacetime establishment of powerful state reserves.¹⁶

This point was also emphasized by a high-ranking, frequent contributor to *Voyennaya mysl'* in a discussion of the role of strategic reserves:

The term strategic reserves is commonly understood to refer to operational ob'yedineniya of various branches of armed forces, soyedineniya and chasty of arms, reserves of nuclear weapons and rockets, and various types of equipment, conventional armament, shells, and other material and technical means which do not have a definite operational function and are at the disposal of the supreme command of the armed forces of a country.*

... the Soviet Union, in order to defend themselves and restrain an aggressor, must maintain in peacetime adequate and fully combat ready forces designated for repelling a surprise nuclear-rocket attack by the probable enemy and delivering an immediate retaliatory strike. Also, Soviet military science considers that *final victory over an enemy*, if the imperialists succeed in unleashing a war, *requires numerous strategic reserves* having various designations.¹⁷ (Emphasis added)

*Operational ob'yedineniya would refer to a major field formation such as a front or army; in the case of the Strategic Missile Force it would likely refer to an army. Soyedineniya and chasty refer to lesser formations such as divisions and regiments.

A notable aspect of both the second echelon and the strategic reserves is concealment. This is critical because neither takes part in the initial exchange and, hence, to survive they must be hidden from the enemy:

The fact of the matter is that in modern conditions a surprise attack cannot produce the expected effect if the forces and means designated for the development of an advantage achieved by a sudden strike suffer considerable losses and do not carry out the missions entrusted to them.¹⁸

Forces “for the development” generally refers to the second echelon forces.

Mobilization of the second and third echelon forces (they are not already in place) would occur at the start of the war. Such forces would need to be made ready as soon as possible. This may be what Sokolovskiy had in mind in 1968 when he was reviewing major strategic planning problems in an article in *Voyennaya mysl'*:

The increasingly complicated problems of preparing for the mobilization deployment of massed armed forces and of providing for their full mobilization and the creation of new formations in conditions of the threat of nuclear attack, and especially after the beginning of a nuclear war, require profound scientific elaboration.¹⁹ (Emphasis added)

“New formations,” when applied to strategic nuclear missiles, likely would refer to new Strategic Missile Force *armies*; this is the entity normally in mind when the word “formation” is used. That this concept applies to strategic nuclear missiles can be concluded from a number of items. There are numerous statements that explicitly include such weapons:

No matter how high the level of military-technical progress, the basic, objective law of war, formulated by Lenin, will not cease to operate: “He will gain the victory in war who has the greatest reserves, the greatest sources of strength, and the greatest support among the masses of the people.” (*Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 55) . . . the expression “sources of strength and reserves,” includes,

along with human resources, all types of the latest combat equipment, *including nuclear-rocket weapons* and that without military-technical superiority over the enemy, achieved before the beginning of the war and maintained throughout its progress, victory in modern war cannot be assured.²⁰ (Emphasis added)

The second echelon and potential third echelon Strategic Missile Force deployments may be the motivations behind statements regarding the need to apply network-planning techniques to the "mass servicing" of missile complexes²¹ (which suggests refurbishment and resupply). This possibility is more directly suggested in a 1969 Soviet text, *Design and Testing of Ballistic Missiles*, where, in discussing the modeling of a nuclear missile exchange, provision is made for the separate accounting of missile reserves and replacement is discussed:

The combat actions are represented as a series of consecutive strikes, as a result of which both sides suffer losses. The losses may be partially recovered by means of reserves, and undamaged missile sites are re-equipped with missiles during the course of combat.²²

Further, statements concerning the role of civil defense units in assisting in the "transportation of munitions, armament, and other material and supplies to strategic missile troops" in a period of mass enemy nuclear strikes have also been identified.²³ Thus, the missiles visible to national intelligence means (overhead photography) may be primarily the first strategic echelon, and there may be stores of strategic missiles and warheads in warehouses or in depots (i.e., not in silos, which would reveal their locations and which are unnecessary because the required combat readiness is measured in hours, days, and even weeks rather than in minutes as is the case with the first strategic echelon).

Such missiles would not be under the command of the Strategic Missile Force armies but, rather, would be held by the rear services and central supply organizations, as indicated in *Voyennaya mysl'* in 1969:

A contemporary war will require colossal material outlays. It will depend to an even greater degree than in the past on support

and supply. From this derives one of the principal requirements: one must have in peacetime sufficient stockpiles and reserves of all supplies needed for combat. It will be extremely important to properly stagger these stores, considering probable troop operations, troop dispersal and a total shelter situation.

The history of the rear services is a history not only of its organizational and operational components but also the history of the central services. Central supply organizations did an immense job of providing the Armed Forces with comprehensive supplies. Unfortunately this has not been sufficiently expressed in the book under review. . . . the center received supplies from the economy, stored them and even produced supplies, restoring to working order damaged equipment of all types, organizing and offering medical care to the sick and wounded. Its duties included restoration of rail lines and maintenance of military truck roads behind the advancing fronts. Colossal assistance was given by central rear services organizations in evacuating industry to the East at the beginning of the war and in rebuilding the economy. . . . There is no question that under modern conditions the role of the central rear services will be considerably more important. Now the central services must supply and support not only troop groupings in the theaters of military operations but also troops deployed throughout the country (*missile*, PVO). Consequently, the central rear services agencies both in the theaters of military operations and *deep in our heartland* must have sufficient manpower and resources available.²⁴ (Emphasis added)

For modern warfare, reserves must be built in peacetime. In the Soviet view, those reserves expected to be needed during the first three to nine months of the war have to be stockpiled because, although efforts are planned to gear up the economy during the period of threat, it is not possible to depend on resuming production during this period of time even though the mobilization is a high-priority activity.²⁵

Nuclear weapons brought about fundamental changes in this situation. The constant threat of a sudden attack by the imperialist aggressors and the consuming, unprecedentedly destructive nature of nuclear war forces us to maintain in constant readiness, even in peacetime, such a structure of armed forces, with corresponding stores of combat and material means, which would

enable us to carry out the strategic missions of a general nuclear war in a short period of time and in the most complicated conditions of a situation. In this case it is hardly conceivable to count on full mobilization of the armed forces.

... The situation is being complicated by the fact that nuclear war may be conducted only with means existing at its beginning, since it will not be possible to count on mobilizational development of the economy in these conditions. The possibilities of production functioning in a period when nuclear strikes are exchanged and during a lengthy period after them are wholly problematical.²⁶

The outcome of a nuclear missile war is, in the Soviet view,

determined first of all by the reserve of nuclear weapons and means for its delivery to the targets as well as of other weapons and other material means which are produced and accumulated during peacetime, before the start of the war.²⁷

Hence, there is a need to estimate total possible expenditures and delineate "principles for creating stores of armament, combat equipment, and material resources, their echeloned location and storage."²⁸ The crucial tasks of military strategy, to repeat a statement quoted previously, are

the determination of the composition of the armed forces for peacetime and especially for time of war; the making of a reserve of arms, military equipment, and, primarily, nuclear rocket weapons as the main means of war, as well as material reserves, deploying strategic groups and organizing the all-around security of the armed forces in time of war.²⁹

The concept of reserves of nuclear weapons and means of delivery refers to those forces remaining after the initial nuclear exchange or battle. It is that postexchange balance which is viewed as the primary measure of the correlation of nuclear forces.³⁰ In fact, an important scenario in Soviet strategy has the war continuing until one side exhausts its stock of nuclear weapons. If the other side still has a sufficient quantity (which appears to be measured at least in the hundreds), it then wins by default.

Although there are insufficient data to enable one to state with certainty that the Soviets have a significant store of reserve ICBMs that are unrecognized by the West, the principle and its logic clearly exist in authoritative, internal Soviet literature. Because of the extent of the Soviet focus on reserves, including nuclear missile reserves, the total size of the Soviet intercontinental missile force might well be (and we believe, is) considerably larger than that indicated by the conventional approach that just counts silos. This is not a unique conclusion; Professor John Erickson of the University of Edinburgh has concluded that Soviet targeting doctrine requires not only launchers, "but also reload capability (and refire capability), which could bring numbers up to four times the nominal ICBM deployment and must attain a minimum of one times one."³¹ This problem, with specific discussion of the potential role of the Soviet SS-16 mobile ICBM and the probable stockpiling of older SS-11 ICBMs is also treated by David S. Sullivan in "The Legacy of SALT I: Soviet Deception and U.S. Retreat."³⁵ The actual existence of such missiles, as of some other items, is difficult to prove, and considerable care is required because of the political implications. Two major issues are challenged, at least implicitly, by the possibility of such reserve missiles. The first is the validity of the Western discussions and calculations of force balances, which may simply omit what might be a significant component of the Soviet forces. The second is the relevance of the U.S. approach to arms control and verification as they apply to strategic missile forces. The approach has apparently been to limit something—in this case, silos—which can be verified, even if it is perhaps a relatively meaningless attribute of force postures, rather than to attempt to limit the strategic delivery capability, which might be extremely difficult to verify. However, given that

*Erickson's "four times the nominal" number might also be suggested if, as has been indicated, "the Soviet leaders . . . may be aiming as high as a 10 to 1 superiority for their side."³² Given the Soviet approach of measuring the nuclear balance—in their terms, the "correlation of nuclear means," which is a broader concept than the Western concept of nuclear balance—in terms of equivalent megatons,³³ the current Soviet advantage, assuming no reserve ICBMs, is of the order of three to one.³⁴ Assuming reserve missile stocks of the size Erickson does could bring the margin of superiority up towards ten to one.

a consistent case can be made for Soviet interest in concealing such reserves, considerable caution should be observed in relying on the assumption that what we do not see does not exist.

Mobilization of the Economy

The need for achieving military superiority over enemies, and for victory in the event of a nuclear missile war, imparts special importance to the economic flexibility of any given state (or coalition of states), which must be able to effect a rapid transition of the entire economy to a wartime footing at the onset of the critical prewar period, introducing mass production of the latest means of armed struggle at the outbreak of hostilities, and maintaining the ability to fulfill the economic needs of army and people during the war itself.³⁶

Although the possibility of production functioning during and following a nuclear exchange is described as "wholly problematical," at the same time, "the problem of mobilization preparedness of the national economy is not removed."³⁷

Reconstitution and recovery of the defense-oriented portion of the economy would be the highest-priority action for the entire economy.³⁸ This process is to be planned in detail prior to the beginning of the war.³⁹ The Soviet goal would be to reconstitute their military capability, beginning with the active nuclear portion—including, specifically, command, control, reconnaissance, and strategic nuclear missiles—and ending with the establishment of a fully equipped army, air force and navy capable of maintaining order within the Soviet Union, preventing invasion, and ultimately occupying strategic portions of hostile countries, including Western Europe and the United States.

Although the planning of this is a major military activity, the actual implementation of the plans and the management of resources probably comes under the auspices of the State Committee of Defense (GKO) in a manner similar to such activity in World War II.⁴⁰ The State Committee of Defense would address all facets of recovery and reconstitution and provide direction to the various industries and agencies normally considered civilian

but, for the duration of the war, mobilized to contribute to the war effort. Although the basic "civilian" leadership would remain in charge, its plans would be developed in support of the war effort and would be subject to review and approval by appropriate elements of the State Committee of Defense in a manner, perhaps, not entirely dissimilar to the manner in which the General Staff assists in the planning of troop operations in the field at levels as low as division and, at times, regiment. The extent of authority and responsibility of the political arm is reflected in the authority vested in the leadership of the party to govern all operations, civilian as well as military, within a military district in time of war.

Civil Defense

Although the basic requirements for civil defense and general economic mobilization have traditionally been well recognized in Soviet military science, a major focus, involving detailed analyses of recovery and reconstitution in relation to nuclear war, appears to have occurred since the early to mid-1960s. In 1961 civil defense was transferred from civilian governmental control to overall military control under Marshal V. I. Chuikov, and civil defense appears to have undergone a "planning stage." During that time civil defense was receiving considerable attention or, at least, publicity in U.S. defense planning. In addition, the Soviet literature of the 1960s clearly expressed the idea that countries like the Soviet Union and the United States, which possessed and were capable of utilizing territorial depth, could not be defeated easily.

It is important to recognize that civil defense in the Soviet Union is not just defense of civilians. Rather, civil defense is responsible for important military tasks, particularly those associated with the repair of damaged installations and lines of communication (transportation net):

In a future war, transport will have enormous importance. Civil defense can render enormous aid to the military command, in this area. Damaged bridges, railroad centers, and other communication

installations can be quickly restored by civil defense forces. All this will facilitate the successful movement of troops into designated areas and will make it possible for troops to implement the required maneuver. This does not exclude a circle of problems which can and must be implemented by the close, continuous coordination of civil defense with the armed forces.⁴¹

Civil defense also includes logistics and resupply missions, as discussed earlier.⁴²

The increasing emphasis on civil defense may have been one of the reasons behind the resurgence of interest in military economics beginning in 1965 and the proposals to establish military economics as a major course of study in the General Staff Academy. As recognized in 1969:

The contemporary revolution in military science, caused by certain economic, scientific-technical and political conditions, has led to even greater intensification of the dependence of war and military science on economics. This has been caused chiefly by the immensely greater complexity and cost of war goods and the increased scale of war production.

Nor should one ignore the inverse effect of war on economics, which is presently acquiring particular significance if only because the economy is now not only the arsenal of war, its material basis, but also one of the principal objects of direct military action. . . .

The most characteristic manifestation of this process is the emergence of a new scientific discipline at the juncture of political economy and military science—military economics. In our view this is not only a branch of knowledge which has gemmated from political economy but a special division of military science as well, which has become relatively independent, just like military educational science, military psychology and other divisions. Military economics studies the economic patterns of war, the specific behavior of the general economic laws under war conditions. These specific features are determined chiefly by armed struggle, its laws and principles, which are cognized and formulated by military science. This is why military economics should organically combine the theory and methodology of political economy and military science. As any newly-emerging juncture science, military economics can be considered as a separate part of those sciences at the margins of which it takes form, in this case at the border between political economy and military science.⁴³

Two important purposes of military economics were stressed—first, to better plan not only the survival but more importantly the stability of the Soviet military economy during nuclear war, and secondly, to better and more efficiently plan how to destroy that of the United States.

A review of the 1966–1970 Five-Year Plan for development of the Soviet economy as it applied to military goals indicated that “measures to protect human resources” had to be carried out in the following areas:

Scattering of industrial installations in peacetime, evacuation of the civilian population from large cities during a clear threat of war or at the outbreak of war, protection of the civilian population in shelters of various types, prompt organization of rescue operations and medical care for casualties.⁴⁴

This can also be deduced from an interview with a member of the State Planning Committee, as reported in *The Role of Nuclear Forces in Current Soviet Strategy*:

Similarly, military theoretician Lieutenant General Zavialov wrote in 1973 about the need for “rationally sited production capacities,” thus “insuring the survival of economic centers.” According to a member of the USSR State Planning Committee, in the years 1966–1970 almost 60 percent of some 1,300 new industrial enterprises were “sited in towns and settlements with a population of up to 100,000 persons.” Such dispersal of industry, it was pointed out, is not only advantageous from an economic point of view, but “is also of significance for defense.” It was said that a similar policy would be pursued in the current Five-Year Plan, with the major portion of new industry being built in small and medium-sized towns, “especially in the Western Ukraine, Moldavia, the Republics of Central Asia and the Transcaucasus.”⁴⁵

At the same time, Soviet studies of the United States were concluding that the United States was the more vulnerable of the two countries, at least partially because of lack of planning of industry location:

The more prescient military leaders in the United States consider, for example, that it is not only a question of the number of

launching sites for intercontinental missiles and missiles of other classes, but also a question of the size of the payload which can be delivered by these missiles to a target, the quality of the missiles themselves and the *degree of vulnerability of an enemy* country. On this basis, they have reached a conclusion on the Soviet Union's superiority over the U.S. in strategic nuclear weapons. The very same thing may be said about the correlation in military-economic potential. Here it is important to take into account not only, and not so much quantitative indicators, as much as the socio-economic advantages of the socialist order, the planned character, and the rational organization of production inherent in the Soviet economy.⁴⁶ (Emphasis added)

This was partially a function of

the high concentration of industry, which is characteristic of the main capitalist countries . . . in obvious contradiction to the requirements of a missile-nuclear war. It results in giving the economic regions the significance of major military industrial targets of strategic significance, the loss of which would undermine the economic capabilities of the state in wartime.⁴⁷

Further, Soviet statements in the early sixties on the ability of countries with territory in depth to survive, which explicitly referred to both the United States and the Soviet Union, in the seventies are made in the singular, referring only to the Soviet Union.

Thus, civil defense, in the Soviet view, was determined to be "a strategic factor"⁴⁸ and "a major contribution toward victory":

Civil defense is becoming a strategic factor which exercises a significant determining influence on the course and outcome of a modern war as well as on the post-war restoration of the economy.

In close coordination with the Soviet Armed Forces, the mission of civil defense is to protect the nation's strategic rear areas, to reduce to a minimum human and resource losses, thus making a major contribution toward victory over the aggressor.⁴⁹

This helps explain the considerable increase in importance that civil defense was accorded in 1972 when Colonel General A. T. Altunin was appointed chief and organizational changes further

raised its stature.⁵⁰ The Soviet view of civil defense as a strategic factor is believed to be the source of the Soviet concern that a civil defense gap may emerge in the U.S. perception of the strategic balance and lead to a resurgence of U.S. efforts, a possibility that the Soviets recognize and apparently have sought to defuse.⁵¹

Civil defense is another area where it is difficult to amass hard evidence to show achievements. A study of Soviet civil defense recently released by the Central Intelligence Agency recognizes Soviet interests but states that there is, however, no evidence of, for example, dispersal of industries, despite indications that such dispersal is considered important in the Soviet literature.⁵² Unfortunately, however, the study fails to address the broad approach to making industry survivable (that is, combinations of hardening, dispersal, and duplication) which is clearly in the Soviet mind:

To ensure the viability of a nation's economy during a nuclear missile war, the political leaders must implement *a number of special measures* in advance. They include duplication, dispersal and concealment of important economic installations, as well as the establishment of an effective anti-aircraft and antimissile defense system.⁵³ (Emphasis added)

Specifically, the CIA study ignores questions of how one hardens or disperses (e.g., how much, how far) if both paths are followed to some extent.⁵⁴ Moreover, it is not clear how difficult it is to amass enough hard evidence to prove or disprove the existence of actual Soviet efforts—particularly in the light of such statements as the one just quoted which indicate that cover and deception are important aspects of this effort.

CHAPTER VI

Strategic Force Targeting and Employment Strategy

Management of the War

THERE IS LITTLE question but that should war come, the entire state apparatus would be geared to the war effort and the unified direction would emanate from what was in the past one person, namely Marshal Stalin, who was simultaneously the head of the State Committee of Defense, the supreme commander in chief, and the general secretary of the communist party, as Marshal Brezhnev is today.

The General Headquarters of the Supreme High Command, called the Stavka, is the critical agency assisting this individual in planning and running the war effort. The General Staff is the executive agency of the Stavka and reports directly to the supreme commander. (This is one of the reasons we have focused on *Voyennaya mysl'*, the main theoretical journal of the Soviet General Staff.) The principle of centralized control in managing the military forces and the role of the General Staff, as described by the Soviets, are clear and unequivocal:

The decisive means of achieving the goals of modern war are rocket and nuclear weapons, with their unlimited effective range and tremendous destructive capabilities. This requires maximum centralization of control of the principal nuclear-rocket weapons

in the Supreme Command, particularly in the initial period of war, for here and only here is it possible to decide correctly and most effectively questions concerning objectives of nuclear strikes, targets for destruction, power of warheads, means for delivering them to the targets, type of explosive effect, time for delivery of strikes, and issue orders for signal dispatches. Only here can the authority be placed for "pressing the button" to activate the principal weapons of war. The Supreme Command has thus become not only a directing organ of supervision, but also the immediate executor of the principal missions of the armed conflict.

The most important task of the General Staff in preparing for a modern war is the detailed planning of the employment of nuclear weapons by all services of the armed forces.¹

One of the problems that the Soviets have wrestled with over the years is the conflict between the centralized control that is traditional in the Soviet military system—and is viewed as even more important in a nuclear environment—and the need for independence at the lower command levels—which is also viewed by many in the Soviet military as important in a nuclear war. On the one hand, things have to be controlled from the top to ensure compliance with a single plan and concept of operations and to provide maximum flexibility in the hands of the strategic leadership. On the other hand, at the operational level the scene tends to change rapidly, and delayed responses can spell the defeat of even large military units. Some degree of initiative is required at these lower levels to cope with unforeseen situations requiring fast reactions. The gap is bridged, in the Soviet view, by the existence of clear doctrine, by consistent and serious indoctrination, and by continual operational training.

As part of this same problem, the Soviets also recognize that the amount of data being generated has become so overpowering that extensive automation is required to handle the sheer volume of information, not to mention the calculations that need to be performed to determine the best military option. Although in the past it has been the practice of the Soviet leadership to manage the war effort directly from the top, including the detailed planning and review of actions at least down to division level,² it must be kept in mind that this was accomplished in World

War II in a relatively slow-moving environment. Where the pace of combat is accelerated by several orders of magnitude, such attention to detail at the very top may no longer be possible even with the aid of automation. Changes are so rapid that there may not be sufficient time available to absorb the information, assess its implications, and determine the available alternatives within the time available for making decisions.

The basic approach that appears to have been adopted, judging from the Soviet literature, is one of focusing on problems by mission and then allocating force packages to various commanders for the performance of various missions. The forces allocated are those estimated to be sufficient to enable a responsible commander to perform his assigned mission—all within the context of the unified and single plan.

As an example, consider the Soviet approach to the question of defeat of a ground force division in Europe. Their analyses indicate that a division can be put out of action if 50 percent of its important elements are eliminated.³ The critical targets are identified, and the probability of acquiring each of these targets is estimated. If, as a result of these calculations, it were determined that a tank division could be put out of action utilizing, say, a dozen nuclear rounds, the weapons to accomplish that particular mission might be turned over as a package to an appropriate army commander. If a front were having "trouble" with five divisions, then a package of, say, 60 weapons could be allocated to the front commander to accomplish his mission. Although there is no conclusive evidence, it is not entirely unlikely that an analogous approach could be used at the strategic level, since the Strategic Missile Force doctrines and procedures stem from the Soviet artillery heritage. Commanders of Strategic Missile Force armies might be assigned specific missions or tasks and allocated an amount of resources (x kilotons and y missiles) deemed sufficient to accomplish those missions. This would be consistent with the concept referred to as group strikes⁴ having specific operational or strategic missions and which are considered subordinate at the army level.⁵ The single and unified plan would then provide for the assignment of priorities and associated scheduling, for the allocation of resources within competing requirements, and for coordination in time and space.

Targeting

Considerable use is made in Soviet target selection of detailed modeling and analysis. Effort appears to be concentrated on examining targets, assigning priorities, identifying appropriate means for attack, and scheduling the attacks. These analyses appear to incorporate both military and political considerations and involve the efforts, along with military specialists, of economists, sociologists, engineers, and physicians.⁶ The Soviets appear to have an approach to target analysis and selection that takes account of the broad objective of each mission and the range of impact of the individual strikes.⁷ Special attention is focused on wind conditions and the production of fallout (including consideration of even the chemical composition of the soil in the target area).⁸

As indicated earlier, the Soviet approach is mission oriented. Rather than beginning with a detailed list of targets, the Soviets appear to begin with the identification of the strategic missions that are to be performed. Individual target categories and discrete targets are subsequently analyzed in terms of their contribution to particular missions. The foremost initial strategic mission is the defeat of the opposing military forces, in particular, the nuclear forces, as noted above.⁹ All targets relevant to that mission are examined, and an appropriate priority is assigned to each, taking into consideration two basic factors: first, the magnitude and likelihood of damage the target can do to the Soviets; and, secondly, the ease with which the target can be destroyed:

The indicated objectives should be examined and classified by the degree of their danger for the attacker. Thus, the launch position, from which 10 minutes ago a strategic rocket was launched, does not represent a threat in the immediate period of time, since the firing of another missile requires a certain period of time. And although strategic rockets are regarded as the most important objectives, in the given case the launch position will be less dangerous than other objectives which could inflict immediate strikes.*

*Note, relative to the earlier discussion on strategic missile reserves, that this paragraph, by inference, again strongly suggests that the Soviets do think about the concept of reserves as applying to strategic nuclear missiles.

Objectives of a deep attack can vary also in the degree of their vulnerability. For example, airfields, formations of reserves, openly placed rocket installations, combat ships in bases and on raids, other stationary objectives, and also junctions of roads and various industrial plants are easily vulnerable. Rocket launch installations in hard sites, storehouses of nuclear weapons, control posts in hard shelters, and submarines and surface ships at sea are not vulnerable objectives.

Having accepted the introduced classification of objectives according to their importance, degree of danger, and degree of vulnerability under conditions of their correct evaluation, it is necessary also to determine the time of attack, that is, to establish priorities for inflicting deep attacks. This is especially necessary due to the limited quantity of means for this.¹⁰

Thus, an important target that is difficult to strike or to destroy may end up having a lower priority than a target that is less important from the standpoint of the damage it can do to the Soviet Union but is relatively easy to destroy. (Although priorities are important, there may, however, be very few targets whose attack would have to be skipped due to the "limited means" recognized in the above quote, given the number and accuracy of Soviet weapons today.)

In the case of particularly important targets, the Soviets write of the need for double coverage, either with similar or dissimilar systems; for example, an initial missile strike followed by an aircraft bomb strike, or coverage with dual ICBM/SLBM strikes. A subsequent strike with aircraft might be particularly useful because the pilot could be instructed to hit only those targets that had not already been successfully destroyed by the initial missile strike.

In discussing the problem of executing a surprise attack against the United States, the Soviets express concern over the readiness of the forces that are to be attacked. Specifically, considering the fast reaction that the Minuteman missiles are capable of (estimated to be "on the order of one minute"),¹¹ the Soviets acknowledge that in targeting this particular force it may be more important to direct the initial strike against associated command/control elements rather than against the missiles

themselves, which can be launched before they can be destroyed.¹² A U.S. launch-on-warning capability is a major concern of the Soviets and may be the U.S. strategy that they assume in their analyses.¹³ It is quite possible that part of the motivation for stationing missiles in Cuba might have been—and may still be—associated with the desire to strike extremely time-sensitive targets (e.g., command/control centers) before appropriate actions to launch the Minuteman missiles could be taken. In this regard, the Soviets recognize explicitly that one of the advantages of submarine-launched ballistic missiles is that they can be launched near the United States and, hence, have a shorter flight time. This enables the Soviets to increase the probability of destroying command/control and launch centers prior to the launch of the missile force. The submarine component of Soviet forces, therefore, may well be designed at least partially to be used early, rather than to be withheld, as has been the U.S. approach:

A strike by *medium-range missiles* can be inflicted first against such objectives as large military-industrial and administrative centers. However, as a means which is closer to enemy objectives, they can be used *above all* for a strike against antimissile and antiair defense means and control posts in order from the very beginning to deprive the state subjected to attack of the capability of defense.¹⁴ (Emphasis added)

Another target category of great importance in the initial strike would be the Western strategic reconnaissance and command/control/communication capabilities.¹⁵ Reconnaissance capabilities would be important in two regards: first, as an effective means of providing warning of the initial Soviet strike to the United States; and, secondly, as a component of the strategic force that makes that force more effective, particularly in subsequent phases of the battle. In the latter role, it can be expected that all reconnaissance capabilities would be attacked early in the initial strike. In the former case, what would happen is far less clear. What is clear, however, is that the Soviets have a great motivation either to disable or to destroy U.S. warning capabilities if there is some way they could do so, possibly covertly. (Alternatively, or in

combination, the Soviets also would have a strong rationale for using these capabilities to confuse U.S. decision making by feeding false information to them, a point noted earlier.) Command/control/communications are considered especially important, and the Soviets recognize that their disruption could lead to defeat:

Under conditions of a nuclear war, the system for controlling forces and weapons, especially strategic weapons, acquires exceptionally great significance. A disruption of the control over a country and its troops in a theater of military operations can seriously effect the course of events, and in difficult circumstances, can even lead to defeat in a war. Thus, areas deserving special attention are the following: knowing the coordinates of stationary operations control centers and the extent of their ability to survive; the presence of mobile command posts and automatic information processing centers; the communication lines' level of development and, first of all, that of underground and underwater cable, radio-relay, ionospheric and tropospheric communication lines; field communication networks and duplicate communication lines; communication centers and the extent of their facilities, dispersion and vulnerability.¹⁶

A possible Soviet attack component that bears careful consideration in the above missions and others is the use of high-altitude nuclear explosions to disable across wide areas all electronics susceptible to disruption in this way. This effect is recognized sufficiently often in the Soviet literature to underscore its importance in their offensive and defensive strategy. An indirect example of this may be the references to damage sustained by the communications media.¹⁷ A more direct reference, and one that suggests that this type of attack might be a rationale for the very high-yield Soviet warheads, is the following statement from *Voyennaya mysl'* in 1966:

For example, a nuclear explosion in the 50 MT range of force at an altitude of 80 km can lead to a complete loss of ordinary ionospheric radio communications over an area radius of 4,000 km in the course of a day due to the influence of the radiation effects of a nuclear explosion.¹⁸

Such attacks are also part of the Soviet strategy of surprise:

To achieve surprise in a modern war, an aggressor on the eve of war and in the course of it, increasing the activities of his reconnaissance, will evidently take active measures to suppress and blind reconnaissance forces and means of the enemy by creating strong interference against radio and radiotechnical means. For this purpose, high-altitude nuclear explosions can be carried out in the beginning and in the course of the war to destroy the system of control and communications and to suppress the antimissile and antiair defense radar system and the aircraft control systems.¹⁹

Also, the vulnerabilities of U.S. strategic missiles are such that

a considerable threat to the intercontinental ballistic missiles are powerful nuclear explosions set off at great altitudes, because the impulses of electromagnetic energy created by such explosions can put out of commission not only the on-board missile equipment, but also the ground electronic equipment of the launch complexes.²⁰

The effect is also recognized as a means of blinding early warning systems, specifically, the Ballistic Missile Early Warning System.²¹ This effect was apparently noted quite early by the Soviets; they appear to have used their 1961–1962 atmospheric test series, with which they broke the nuclear test moratorium entered into in 1958, to collect considerable high-altitude experimental data. This series also included explosions with yields of 25 and over 50 megatons. (The Soviets have subsequently stated that they have these yields in their active inventory.) Following the conclusion of the test series, the Soviets moved quickly to agree to the partial test ban treaty, thus prohibiting further testing in the atmosphere and in outer space.

The U.S. concept that restraint in attacking command/control/communications assets would be reciprocated, at least partially because such assets would be needed to conduct negotiations, is not reflected in available data on Soviet thinking. It is possible—but unlikely—that the Soviets have considered the notion but not written of it. It is also possible that future Soviet thinking may give more weight to this concept. However, it seems a more likely

alternative that the Soviets would view those assets required for a negotiating process as those owned and controlled by the Soviet Union, including, for example, covert communication links that would put the Kremlin in instant and continuous contact with high-level Soviet officials either overtly or, perhaps, covertly placed at strategic locations throughout the United States. Since at least 1964 the Soviets have expressed clear interest in the use of covert communications and have discussed such techniques as burst transmission, spread spectrum, and laser communications in their literature.²²

Emplacement of Soviet officials in strategic locations might also play an important role in the Soviet plans for control of the United States in the postattack time frame. In this regard, it is possible that the Soviets would plan on having a number of cells of such persons throughout the United States (and in certain neighboring strategic regions in Canada, selected offshore islands and, especially, Mexico) that could be activated to perform important roles both on the eve of the war—by causing extensive disruption of the political process, as noted above—and during the war. This latter function might encompass providing trans-attack information to the Soviet government; supplying potential points of contact for communication; directing sabotage operations; recovering air forces; and providing staging bases for subsequent occupation and control forces, as was done in the Manchurian campaign in World War II and in Czechoslovakia in 1968.

Of these possibilities, the sabotage operation is worthy of careful consideration. Sabotage as a concept can include a wide variety of destructive actions by enemy agents (e.g., blowing up communication facilities; poisoning water supplies; seizing radio and television stations; jamming satellite station-keeping links; stopping subways, trains, and planes) where the purpose of such acts is to impede the armed forces or to retard essential industry or public services, as discussed above. Although there are unquestionably very difficult command and control problems associated with a concerted sabotage effort, the possibilities of such an effort as part of a surprise attack on the United States should not be quickly discounted. It also appears quite likely that the United

States would be extremely susceptible to such types of activity. Consider the article by Joseph Albright in the *Atlantic Journal and Constitution*: "As an imposter I talked my way past the security guards at two highly secret Air Force nuclear weapons depots last month and was given a tour of the weak links in their defenses against terrorist attacks."²³ This took place in 1977. Roughly a year later, the *Omaha World-Herald* reported that investigators posing as enemy agents penetrated security at the Strategic Air Command Headquarters at Offutt Air Force Base: "the breached area [was] the operating base for the SAC airborne command post, reconnaissance planes and aircraft to be used by the President in time of international crisis."²⁴

As indicated earlier, two major objectives at the beginning of a Soviet attack would be, first, to achieve surprise, and, second, to disrupt and disorganize political and military command and control. The purpose of both objectives is to deny an enemy the ability to undertake an organized defense and counterattack. Key U.S. capabilities in this regard are (1) early warning sensors, both satellites and land-based radar stations; (2) information-processing centers associated with the receipt of satellite intelligence information; (3) the decision process and key individuals necessary for its functioning, including the president, top-level military and defense officials, and key SAC commanders; (4) the communications capabilities that link these individuals; and (5) the electronic control and navigation capabilities associated in particular with the strategic submarine and bomber forces.

All these are targets that might be susceptible to attack by small sabotage teams. Although one can envision the requirements for a massive effort, it is not at all clear how many targets of such a target set it would be necessary to attack to be effective. Consider, for example, the apparent sabotage in Japan in May, 1978, in which an

underground cable linked to microwave and radar facilities controlling 90 percent of the air traffic over Japan was cut . . . paralyzing domestic and military air traffic for three hours. . . . Cables to the Tokyo Air Traffic Control Center located in Tokorozawa . . . west of Tokyo were cut in two manholes. Both manholes had been sealed as a precaution against sabotage.²⁵

In this case an attack against only two points had a considerable impact. Certainly the possibility and the potential impact of such acts being conducted by Soviet agents around the world are worth investigating.

If the Soviets decided to use sabotage to better degrade the U.S. capabilities to respond in the opening phase of the war, they would likely begin by coordinating the timing of the sabotage acts with the onset of hostilities in order to better achieve surprise and disrupt the U.S. political and military decision process. The early hours of the morning or some other time when it would be most difficult to bring the appropriate officials together might be best. The Egyptian attack on Israel during Yom Kippur in 1973 is a recent example of such attention to timing. Bad weather, particularly the types of weather conditions which might lead technicians to associate equipment failures with weather rather than with acts of direct sabotage or the beginning of war, would probably be favored. One can posit the existence of a number of sabotage groups that might receive orders perhaps an hour or two before the Soviet missile launch. They might have already been assigned and equipped to attack particular communications installations or electric power capabilities coincident with the initiation of the attack.

It is not inconceivable to us that a significant portion of the U.S. communications, command/control, early warning, navigation, and electric power facilities could be disabled by well-prepared sabotage, or "diversionary" efforts as the Soviets often refer to them. The main problem is that of command and control, including the planning or orchestration of such an effort and the associated risk of warning the United States—which would negate the entire objective of surprise. Although it is very difficult to identify direct references in the Soviet literature to the possibility of this type of activity being undertaken against the United States, their consideration of it in a theater context has been identified. For example, stated in a defense context:

Rocket troops are the main means of fire-power in an offensive operation. Therefore the defending side naturally will do everything possible to inflict an attack first of all on the rocket weapons,

using nuclear and conventional weapons, various kinds of landing and even *diversionary* forms of attack.²⁶ (Emphasis added)

And, in what is believed to be an offensive context:

Through the use of airborne and amphibious landings and the wide employment of *diversionary* and reconnaissance groups in the rear area of the advancing troops, the defensive will strive to *disorganize troop control* and create conditions which would complicate the efforts of the armed forces promptly and successfully executing the strategic as well as most important operational missions. During the armed conflict, the enemy may be expected to conduct broad misinformation measures, conceal his true designs, and implement camouflage activities which are varied in content and scale. Such enemy measures must be countered by actions which would decrease the effectiveness of these measures and at the same time would ensure the successful execution of friendly missions. Sufficiently complete and factual information from the various types of intelligence on the position and designs of the opposite side would permit the command to take the necessary steps promptly.

The execution of strategic missions and the achievement of strategic goals will frequently cause the command to assign necessary forces and means for consolidating the attained results. This may be particularly so in the seizure of vitally important economic areas and administrative and political centers of countries in the enemy coalition, and in the seizure of islands, archipelagos, straits, and other areas and targets having an important strategic significance.²⁷ (Emphasis added)

Although such statements are more directly related to theater operations, there appears to be sufficient inferential evidence (such as clear indications that much more than mere nuclear strikes would be included in the initiation of global nuclear war) to warrant serious consideration of such a strategy in the context of a strategic intercontinental nuclear war. Besides the defeat of enemy forces, the Soviets have other strategic missions, as discussed above, including the breakup of alliances such as NATO, the seizure of strategic areas, the prevention of recovery of military warfighting capability (i.e., destruction of hostile

military potential), and the installation of pro-Soviet governments.²⁸ All these goals could be significantly influenced or assisted by well-planned sabotage operations.

For each objective, the particular missions and appropriate targets are carefully analyzed. One Soviet purpose is to understand how to accomplish a mission most effectively and most efficiently. Considerable attention is focused on identifying, for example, the critical branches of each target system that must be destroyed in order to accomplish the mission and, within each branch, the critical or vulnerable points that should be targeted.²⁹ Total destruction appears to be considered unnecessary. The analyses, as indicated previously, address not merely technical aspects, but psychological, physiological, and geopolitical ones as well:

For undermining the enemy's strategic potential there is no need for its complete destruction. For this it can be sufficient to put out of action one of its most important elements. In this connection an enormous role is acquired by the working out of the scientific criteria and principles of selection of targets, and also the means of influencing them. The qualified solution to the given problem requires the participation along with military specialists, of economists, sociologists, engineers, and physicians.³⁰

Related to the mission of preventing the recovery of military capability, there are several interesting discussions of the economy and the importance of various branches. Those of importance, as cited in the Soviet literature, are (1) electric power; (2) oil; (3) certain critical chemical industries; and (4) transportation. According to *Voyennaya mysl'*:

It is known that modern industry is possible only with the efficient cooperation of all its branches and transportation. If one or two key branches of the transportation are put out of action the entire economic life of the country is disrupted and, consequently, its military potential will be sapped or significantly weakened.

... Especially effective could have been attacks against the electric power and oil refining industries, since electric power is re-

quired in large amounts by all branches of the national economy, including the defense industries.

Power stations, particularly large ones, are also advantageous targets because power-consuming and very important defense-industry enterprises (chemical, aluminum, and magnesium plants, and others) are frequently situated near them. This will make it possible along with the destruction of the electric power stations to put out of action many other important enterprises, and also electrified transport. . . . under modern conditions, it is difficult to overrate its importance.

. . . Of all the other branches of heavy industry, the chemical should be singled out in particular. Some of its enterprises are exceptionally important and extremely vulnerable.

. . . The disruption of transport operations will have an enormous effect on the economic and military capabilities of a country.³¹

In examining the U.S. economy, the Soviets appear to pay particular attention to the U.S. civil defense analyses that were conducted, particularly during the 1960s, at such companies as the RAND Corporation, Stanford Research Institute, and Research Triangle Institute. These studies noted, for example, in the case of electric power that the destruction of a relatively small number of power distribution points could have the same effect during the initial period of the war as the destruction of a much larger number of power plants. The "Northeast power failure," which demonstrated the high vulnerability of electric power to minor problems and the immediate impact of its interruption, did not go unnoticed in Soviet military literature. The vulnerability and number of oil refineries within the United States are also discussed. In fact, in the Soviet literature, the two branches of industry whose destruction is viewed as critical in preventing U.S. recovery of its war-making potential are electric power and oil. The destruction of electric power facilities is seen as having the most impact because the "economic potential" of the United States consists "of heavy industry based on modern electric power."³² Moreover, "it is difficult to overrate its importance."³³ Electric power seems to occur, almost invariably, first on Soviet lists of targets that will sustain damage in a war:

Damage will be sustained by power stations, industrial complexes, railroads, bridges, communications media, and hydraulic installations. Huge tracts of land will be contaminated by radioactive fallout.³⁴

It is also interesting to note that electric power is included in the Soviets' definition of strategic objective:

Strategicheskii Ob'yekt [strategic objective]—An objective of strategic importance. Under present-day conditions, a strategic objective may be: nuclear weapons; major groupings of ground, air, or naval forces; administrative-political and economic centers; major ports, naval and air force bases; power-engineering systems, etc.³⁵

The Soviet strategy of splitting up alliances, knocking certain countries out of the war, and dividing an area into manageable sectors also receives considerable attention and appears to apply to the United States as well as to such theaters as NATO. The Soviet Union might well divide the United States into strategic regions in order to facilitate their targeting plans and the postattack administrative transition. The Soviet approach to targeting specifically emphasizes the importance of regional considerations:

It is now possible to attack effectively targets covering a large area and to put out of action simultaneously all the main industrial centers and regions throughout the entire depth of enemy territory. However, this does not mean that in each specific instance the special features of the economy and the presence of critical and vulnerable points will not be considered. In selecting any specific region as the target and determining the sequence of nuclear strikes against it, first and foremost it is necessary to determine the effect the strikes will have at a given time, the influence of the target on the progress of armed combat and on the functioning of the entire life of the country. It is also important to determine the quantity of forces and means required for destruction of the target and the capabilities of the enemy to rebuild. For this purpose it is important to study the relative importance of specific regions (objectives) to the industrial production of the country, especially in the output of production required in the manufacture

of missiles and nuclear weapons and other modern combat materiel; the role of the region in the political life of the country; the degree that the given industrial complex is tied in with other branches of industry; the relative importance of the region as a population center of the country, and especially as a source of qualified and scientific-technical personnel; the vulnerability of the region and the extent that its industrial output can be produced by other industrial centers. In the selection of regions (objectives) for nuclear attacks the industrial branch principle of exerting influence on the economic potential of a country will also be given consideration.³⁶

Regions that would be expected to be destroyed completely because of mass targeting might well be viewed as dividing the country into other regions that are considered more important for their transattack or postattack recovery roles. In fact, the approach taken appears to be to review military aspects of the various "economic regions" (even taking into account the redistribution of military-industrial potential that occurred as a result of the Vietnam War effort). Means of communication and control elements or cells, as previously mentioned, might be established within each region and could act both as a source of information and as a focal point to communicate orders. Within each area, it can be expected that all key U.S. individuals would be identified and analyzed in terms of their favorableness to Soviet-imposed controls in a transattack or postattack environment. The Soviets would plan to channel massive propaganda, psychological, and misinformation efforts through various organizations to cause the downfall of those who would oppose the Soviet Union and to place in favorable positions those who would be most easily swayed in the directions the Soviet Union would like to impose. The Soviet Union can be expected to do all it can to influence any person whom they believe has power in various types of organizations, such as labor unions and—very importantly—the news media.

It is sometimes suggested that population is not regarded as an interesting target by the Soviets. This is not entirely true. The Soviets do, clearly, examine population as one element of a target set, and they do consider casualties, generally, in their decision

process. However, their examination appears to be quite different from the comparable Western approach, which just counts bodies. People *per se* are not considered a target by the Soviets. Only specialized aspects of a population—government administrators, people necessary to the functioning of vital centers that the Soviets would want to shut down, scientific and technically skilled personnel—appear to be considered by the Soviet General Staff as important targets to either destroy or capture, depending upon the particular mission and their location.³⁷

CHAPTER VII

The Strategic Decision

IT IS QUITE CLEAR in the Soviet literature that the decision to go to war would be a political decision made by the top political and strategic leadership and, moreover, that the decision to use nuclear weapons, including the types of targets and the particulars of the weapons to be employed, would also be first and foremost a political decision. (It appears quite possible that the Soviet political direction of weapons employment from the top might be at least as tight as is the case in the West, even though great emphasis is placed on control and on control devices in the West.) However, because of the manner in which statements concerning the political control and political decision process in the Soviet Union are often interpreted, it appears appropriate to draw a few distinctions between the Soviet system and that of the United States. In particular, "political" in the Soviet context does not imply the same thing as "political" is often interpreted as meaning in the West. First, in the West, a political decision is often interpreted as being in contrast to a military decision and as being made for reasons which are other than military in nature. This separation does not appear appropriate in referring to a political decision in the Soviet Union, where political and military aspects appear to be thoroughly integrated. Thus, Soviet reference to the concept of a political decision does not imply the absence of the military, but rather, its strong and extensive inclusion as part of the decision process. In fact, the Soviets repeatedly stress that in time of war there would be a "unity of political and military leadership."¹

Second, the political leaders in the Soviet Union are not basically civilian in contrast to military. They are instead party officials with strong military backgrounds. To suggest, for example, that Marshal Brezhnev is basically a civilian and exercises civilian thought in considering a wartime decision overlooks the fact that his background is principally military, albeit as a political officer. In World War II he was with the army in the field throughout the war, first in the capacity of deputy chief of the Political Directorate of the Southern Front, subsequently as chief of the Political Department of the Eighteenth Army, and, finally, as chief of the Political Department of the Fourth Ukrainian Front. Following the war, he participated in the development of long-range missile systems. His background, while perhaps not that of a field commander, is clearly strong on the military side and certainly includes extensive and fundamental groundings in military principles, military systems, and the use of power in an even more ruthless sense than the normal military use of power, as was exhibited in his various positions as head of political departments during World War II. Similarly, while frequently cited as a "civilian," Minister of Defense Marshal Ustinov was peoples' commissar for armaments in World War II, was promoted to colonel general in 1944, was subsequently minister of armaments, and at various times in his career had major responsibility in Soviet ICBM, space, and other weapons development programs. He represents, like Brezhnev, the party.² In short, we believe that describing the current Soviet strategic leadership as civilian is the product of the "Western folk mind"³ and is a problem of "semantic infiltration"⁴ and grossly misrepresents the situation.

In addition to being, first and foremost, a political decision, the initiation of strategic nuclear operations is also, as discussed earlier, to be a rational decision. The Soviets emphasize in their literature the fact that one of the significant qualitative changes that distinguishes modern from past warfare is that with the use of nuclear weapons it is possible to suddenly, decisively, and unexpectedly change the correlation of forces. The single most important military aspect of the correlation of forces is what in the West is referred to as the nuclear balance, or what the Soviets

would refer to as the correlation of nuclear means:

The revolution in military affairs has exerted and continues to exert great influence on the correlation of forces between opposing coalitions; today it is important to take into consideration first of all the possession of nuclear weapons and means of delivering them to the target. The fact is that employment of mass destruction weapons can suddenly and swiftly alter the correlation of all other forces and capabilities possessed by the adversaries prior to the outbreak of hostilities. This constitutes a qualitatively new aspect in the process of fighting for victory in the war of today.⁵

The principal thrust of Soviet military strategy at least since 1962, both in peacetime and in war, has been to achieve a preponderance of strength, principally nuclear strength. This preponderance of strength is measured in terms of the military correlation of forces. Superiority in the correlation of forces is viewed as very important for a variety of reasons:

First and foremost, account should be taken of the fact that the established correlation of forces determines the actual capabilities of the sides to exert influence on one another at a given moment with a determined degree of probability of success. In the process the advantage in principle accrues to that side which significantly surpasses the other in strength in the aggregate or in individual and the more essential components of combat might. Superiority accelerates the process of the physical and moral defeat of the enemy, makes it possible to operate more daringly and decisively, and to impose one's will on the enemy and to attack him more successfully. It promotes the development of flexibility in the selection of scales, forms and methods of conducting combat operations, expands the scope of methods for coordinating the delivery of nuclear, fire and air attacks with the maneuver of troops, and increases the effectiveness of using space, time, and other factors which influence the course of military operations. Conversely, an obvious shortage of forces substantially limits capabilities for organizing the repulsing of the enemy.⁶

This military correlation of forces, rather than being a "static peacetime indicator, is analyzed in its dynamic state,"⁷ and the

initial nuclear strike itself is often referred to as "the time when the correlation of forces should be changed." To repeat an earlier quote indicating the importance of this:

Most important in a military leader's foresight is his ability to detect the basic tendencies in the development of an armed struggle. This permits him to foretell with the required accuracy the moment when the correlation of forces should be changed.⁸

The leader's "foresight" is especially important. The Soviets recognize that strength alone is insufficient. In addition to having strength, it is essential that it be used effectively:

Superiority in forces and resources is, of course, an important prerequisite for a commander's freedom of action, for his freedom to choose the method of combat, to select the sector and timing of the main thrust, to determine the initial objective and the subsequent mission, etc. But again, this very superiority emerges as a necessity which gives scope to the commander's actions.

While emphasizing the importance of the correlation of forces as a factor determining the degree of freedom enjoyed by a military leader in the course of an armed struggle, Soviet military science proceeds from the premise that possession of freedom is essentially identical with a military commander's judicious exercise of initiative and with his ability to impose his will upon the enemy. Display of this latter quality of a commander by a military leader has always exerted a strong influence on the course of combat operations or engagements.⁹

Another example of the Soviet view that correlation of forces is one of the major criteria for assessing the reasonableness of military planning is stated in *The People, the Army, the Commander*:

Whether or not war aims, plans and concepts of military operations are realistic depends on the degree to which they are scientific in the full sense of the word. Only genuine science, which faithfully reflects objective reality, lights the way for practical action and provides the key to attainment of the goal. A dialectical materialist approach to thorough comprehension of the process and phenomena of war does not tolerate subjectivistic distortions of reality. Disinclination to consider the true state of affairs, a tendency to

ignore the correlation of forces and one's own weaknesses, as well as underestimation of difficulties can lead to serious consequences.

At this point it is appropriate to state the following question: what can be the criterion of reasonableness of war aims and military planning?

We know that practical experience serves as a criterion of truth. In armed combat the reasonableness of objectives, aims and plans is tested in the process of execution of strategic operations, by the results of activities of the government and top military leadership of the belligerent country, and by the course and outcome of the war as a whole. At the same time one must bear in mind that the objectives, aims and plans of the one belligerent are opposed by those of the other. Therefore the following constitute a criterion in this case: the correlation of forces and capabilities of the opposing sides; the correctness and perspicacity of the political and military leaders; the generalship of the military leaders.¹⁰

A 1967 article in *Voyennaya mysl'* emphasizes that the methods used to determine the correlation of forces should make it possible

not simply to compute the correlation of forces after any particular stage of combat actions, but also to prognosticate this correlation and utilize it as a most important criterion which can be applied to judging the success of planned actions.¹¹

As indicated earlier and in the above quote, the Soviet view of the correlation of forces is different from the usual concept of the strategic balance in the United States because the correlation is evaluated *after* the nuclear exchange, and, perforce, it explicitly includes factoring in many important qualitative aspects, such as the actual plan of the attack, command/control, reconnaissance, and force readiness:

Especially distinctive is the correlation of forces after the exchange of the first nuclear strikes. . . . it should be acknowledged that the best variant of a nuclear strike is the one which ensures the greatest correlation of forces in our favor after the strike is delivered . . . the correlation of forces in a nuclear war remains one of the most important criteria by which it is possible to judge the success of combat operations, and also to select the most expedient variance

of the operations. The correlation of forces in terms of nuclear weapons must be defined as the relationship of the combat capabilities of the sides *during the infliction of strikes*; it depends on the coefficients for the distribution of the nuclear means of the sides, the probabilities of overcoming the defense, and the non-destruction of the nuclear means at launch as well as the variants of inflicting strikes.¹² (Emphasis added)

The calculation of this correlation of forces is not a mere military tool for planning. Rather, it appears to be an operational factor in the formation of strategy and in strategic decision making. It appears to apply and to be considered at the highest levels of the Soviet military-political leadership, where it is recognized that the laws of warfare must be considered in planning and directing military operations. Further, the Soviets recognize that an

essential condition for correct political leadership is scientific substantiation of plans and their conformity with the realistic capabilities of the belligerent nation. Ignoring this vital requirement leads to failure and defeat.

... The experience of history and analysis of the present situation teach us that sober calculation of the correlation of forces between us and our adversary constitutes an important principle of leadership in a war. Correct calculation of the correlation of forces of the warring parties enables the political and military leadership to determine what is possible and what is impossible in the course of war, to foresee the adversary's probable actions and to select the most effective means and forms of armed struggle under various conditions.

... The advent of nuclear weapons and new methods of warfare occasioned by the existence of these weapons, as well as the very nature of a potential future world war, impose several demands on the political leadership, compelling them to give particular attention to the correlation of forces with the adversary and to seek a favorable change in this balance.¹³

Intuition and subjective evaluations that were relied upon heavily in the past, while still of some importance, are no longer considered sufficient due to the magnitude and complexity of the problem, the lack of experience with nuclear warfare, and the

rapidity of such warfare, which allows no time to learn.¹⁴

Estimates must be as objective as possible and should make use of the latest achievements of mathematics and, especially, electronics. Here, the use of automation to assist in the computations, a field that the Soviets have regarded as being as important as nuclear weapons and missiles (i.e., military cybernetics) is clearly indicated. This was the major subject of the *Voyennaya mysl'* article in 1967 by Major General I. I. Anureyev, "Determining the Correlation of Forces in Terms of Nuclear Weapons." The requirement for automation is also discussed in *The People, the Army, the Commander*:

Victory over a powerful adversary in a nuclear missile war can be won only if all the Services and branches of the Armed Forces are put into action at the very outset. War will require the collection, analysis and synthesis of combat situation data extremely rapidly, for without this it would be impossible to make well-substantiated decisions. And decisions, in turn, should be communicated to the forces and implemented by them without delay.¹⁵

The Soviets recognize that one cannot absolutize mathematical formularizations, that decisions are made by men, not computers, and that "mathematics cannot substitute for an entire complex of social, economic, and ideological substantiation essential for making crucial political and strategic decisions."¹⁶ Still, they emphasize that

the increased demands on effectiveness and substantiation of adopted decisions brings the necessity of more extensive adoption of mathematical methods in the area of military science. . . .

The adoption of mathematical methods not only does not negate the necessity of a qualitative analysis of phenomena but, on the contrary, is based on such an analysis. . . . By means of such an analysis one isolates the object of investigation, determines its composition, the character of internal and external relations, and establishes the parameters which require quantitative evaluations, and a criterion of effectiveness, by means of which one can make the necessary calculation and change appropriate characteristics of the phenomenon.

. . . Extensive potential has opened up for mathematical description and logical formalization of the laws of warfare. In spite of

their complexity, the process of warfare can be described by means of a rigorous mathematical edifice, with a high degree of accuracy in approximating reality.¹⁷

Again, the emphasis is on victory, on objective, scientifically based, well-substantiated decisions, and on taking all evidence into account for the initial strike, i.e., at the very outset.

The decision to go to war will include consideration of many factors, for example, casualties, behavior of the general population, strength of reserves, and the ability of both sides to recover, in addition to the correlation of forces.¹⁸ Although strict assessments of the military correlation of forces can forecast the "possibility" of victory, this by itself is not a sufficient criterion, simply because the cost may be too great. This cost is the "second criterion":

Thus the principal criterion of effectiveness, which must be included in the *algorithm for working out a strategic decision*, is the proportion of damage inflicted on the economic, political and military potentials of the enemy country under different variants for the use of available forces and equipment. (Emphasis added)

However, taking into consideration the bilateral nature of armed struggle, this criterion alone will be insufficient for working out a complete, optimum decision, since the enemy will assign a similar aim to his armed forces. In order to win a war we must use a portion of the forces and equipment for repulsing and foiling enemy actions which are intended to cause damage to our country. In this way, the algorithm must take into consideration a second criterion, i.e., the reduction of our own losses to a minimum. These two criteria have a particular character and are, therefore, particular.*¹⁹ (Emphasis added)

The correlation of forces can tell the national leaders *not* to go to war, or *how* and *when* they can best go to war, if the overall

*Part of the cost is, of course, the population losses that the Soviet Union would suffer. Although there is no information as to what the Soviets might regard as an "acceptable loss," the figures presented in their 1969 civil defense manual on the levels to which population losses can be reduced by dispersal and evacuation programs, i.e., 5 percent to 8 percent,²⁰ a figure confirmed by the recent CIA study on Soviet civil defense,²¹ may provide an indication. It can be reasonably assumed that the 5 to 8 percent figure cannot be *above* the level of acceptable losses if the Soviets have published it as the objective of their program.

appraisal of the leadership is that war has become inevitable:

Calculating the correlation of forces is not an end in itself. It is connected with many functions of strategic planning and the military-political leadership both during the prewar period as well as while a war is in progress. Obviously it is extremely important not only to establish the correlation of forces of the sides, but also on the basis of this to work out the most correct political and military decisions. From the established correlation of forces of the sides depend *the elaboration of the plan* for the war and for operations, the *purposefulness of strategy and operational art*, and the *determination of ways* to change this correlation to achieve victory in armed combat.²² (Emphasis added)

The Soviets explicitly recognize that no one has any experience in nuclear warfare, and that, therefore, considering the potential decisiveness of the war effort, it is essential to make maximum use of all possible scientific considerations and techniques to predict the course of the war and the probabilities of winning the war. This entails modeling the nuclear exchange and, specifically, determining the correlation of forces following the exchange. If the correlation of forces following the exchange results either in overwhelming superiority for the Soviets or a preponderance of nuclear strength that the enemy cannot overlook, then the military judgment of the decision would seem to indicate that from a military point of view, the war can be won.

The military input would, however, be balanced by other special assessments of both the Soviet and the enemy capabilities, such as might, perhaps, be conducted by KGB analysts. Clearly, the "price of victory" and its acceptability involve a tradeoff among alternatives and are difficult if not impossible to consider in the abstract. Such an assessment of "price" would likely begin with an estimate of probable damage to the Soviet Union but would need to consider such offsetting "benefits" as might accrue from the capture and occupation of Western Europe in the opening phase of the war. This is not meant to de-emphasize the destruction that would ensue or to overrate the benefits that might accrue from the capture of Western Europe but rather to point out that what counts is the *Soviet* assessment of the alternatives and *their* judgments on what is acceptable.

The Soviets would, of course, prefer to gain their goals of expansion of the communist system and world revolution without having to suffer the impact of war. The Soviets appreciate the risks that attend any modern armed conflict, particularly a nuclear conflict. They view the destruction that would result as detrimental to "social progress" and to the "progressive development" of society, that is, the construction of communism:

It is especially important to have this in mind in modern conditions where imperialism is threatening humanity with nuclear war. War with the employment of nuclear weapons can undermine the very foundations for the existence of human society and inflict tremendous damage to its progressive development. Therefore, the most important requirement for progress in our time is the preventing of a new world war. Capitalism, as the main obstacle on the way to the progressive development of human society, must and should be eliminated by the revolutionary struggle of the popular masses under conditions of peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems—world war is not necessary for this.²³

This view was reconfirmed at the 24th CPSU Congress in 1971.

Thus, as in the above quote, in discussing the decision to go to war (that is, the decision to initiate global nuclear war), the Soviets emphasize their role in preventing such a war. The Soviets never start a war. *By definition* the United States or, more generally speaking, "imperialism is the source of all antagonistic conflicts of the present day world, the source of war danger."²⁴ As such, the typical caveat that accompanies all Soviet discussions on world nuclear war is the phrase "should the imperialists initiate world nuclear war." Accordingly, the Soviet literature does not speak of how the Soviets might "initiate" world nuclear war. Rather, they speak of preventing or forestalling nuclear war and preempting and breaking up an enemy nuclear attack, all of which could entail a number of actions, including a preemptive or preventive nuclear strike. Whether the Soviets would deliberately strike first with nuclear weapons is an extremely important and difficult question. This issue is crucial because it is the "bottom line" of any analysis of the *Soviet* view of the (ir)rationality of nuclear war, its (im)possibility, the value of superiority and war survival measures, and, thus, the possibility and costs of victory. The question

is extremely difficult; first, because there likely is no definitive answer; secondly, because an overwhelming amount of evidence is required to develop a credible answer, and no such overwhelming evidence is known to exist; and thirdly, because it is unquestionably in the Soviet interest to ensure that the evidence available to the United States supports the contention that they would not start such a war.* However, some comments can be made on several considerations that bear on the issue, and two specific surprise attack scenarios can be drawn from the Soviet literature.

One consideration is the value the Soviets place on surprise. As indicated above, surprise has many crucial dimensions and relates to all aspects of Soviet doctrine and strategy. Surprise is considered to be "a more important condition for achieving victory than overall superiority."²⁵ According to the *Soviet Dictionary of Basic Military Terms*:

Surprise makes it possible to inflict heavy losses upon the enemy in short periods of time, to paralyze his will, and to deprive him of the possibility of offering organized resistance. Surprise is achieved in the following ways: by using various types of methods of combat; by misleading the enemy as to one's own intentions; by safeguarding the security of operational plans; by decisive action and skillful maneuver; by unexpected use of nuclear weapons; and by using means and methods with which the enemy is unfamiliar.²⁶

And, to repeat a quote cited earlier:

Therefore, a correct estimate of the elements of the supremacy over the opponent and the ability to use them before the opponent does, are the key to victory in such a war.²⁷

Superiority, among other benefits, may well operate to give the superior party more opportunity to achieve surprise, i.e., to attack more successfully:

Superiority accelerates the process of the physical and moral defeat of the enemy and makes it possible to operate more daringly and

*One of the best recent examples of this Soviet technique is the 1977 article "The 'Theology' of Strategy" by Henry Trofimenko (see chapter 1).

decisively and to impose one's will on the enemy and to attack him more successfully. It promotes the development of flexibility in the selection of scales, forms and methods of conducting combat operations, expands the scope of methods for coordinating the delivery of nuclear, fire and air attacks with the maneuver of troops and increases the effectiveness of using space, time and other factors which influence the course of military operations. Conversely, an obvious shortage of forces substantially limits capabilities for organizing the repulsing of the enemy.²⁸

In examining nuclear war, the Soviets have distinguished three situations. In a description attributed to Marshal Malinovskiy in the fall of 1963, these three cases are as follows: first, surprise attack by the West with all its forces, a situation to be prevented at all costs; second, the Soviets strike first—"by far the most advantageous solution" for the Soviet Union; and third, both countries attack simultaneously, a "very poor second best."²⁹ Moreover, the three were time phased: the first was characteristic of the fifties; the third, the sixties;* and the ultimate goal, the second, to be achieved in the seventies. This description and the value assigned to each situation merely reaffirm the basic Soviet strategy that if there is to be a war, great advantages, including a much higher possibility of victory, accrue to the side that strikes first, especially if that strike is a surprise attack. The Soviets underline the importance of their striking first, the importance of this strike being a surprise strike, and, hence, the importance of anticipating or foreseeing Western actions in order to better allow them to strike first. As pointed out above, the initial nuclear strike can, in the Soviet view, decide the course of the war.

Nuclear war is not a mere theoretical abstraction to the Soviets. In the mid-1950s the Soviets changed their declaratory doctrine from one that proclaimed that world war between the socialist and capitalist states was inevitable to one that recognized that the goals of socialism could be accomplished without world nuclear war. In no sense, however, does this imply that the Soviets regard nuclear war as either impossible or unlikely. On the contrary, not only is

*Perhaps related to this, in 1965 in *Voyennaya mysl'*, Major General I. Zav'yalov, a member of the editorial board, in discussing strategic defense and its role in modern day combat, quoted Sokolovskiy and Cherednichenko as follows: "Now both sides will attack simultaneously, and first of all with the principal instrument of warfare—rockets and nuclear weapons. . . ." ³⁰

the threat real, but world nuclear war apparently may even be regarded as "probable." An analysis of the nature and types of wars of the modern era in *Voyennaya mysl'* in the late 1960s encapsulates quite clearly the Soviet position:

The danger of nuclear world war is now connected not only with a possible sudden attack by the imperialists on the socialist camp as a whole but also with the possibility that a local conflict will develop into a world war. . . . danger number one in our time would be the unleashing of nuclear world war by the imperialists. Although such a war is not fatalistically inevitable, nonetheless its threat remains real. . . . A world war of two social systems, should the imperialists succeed in unleashing it, will become a decisive conflict between them. Under modern historical conditions, it will inevitably end by the defeat of imperialism and the triumph of socialism. But together with this, it will also lead to the most dire consequences for all peoples and countries, insofar as it will be waged by weapons of mass destruction—primarily, nuclear weapons. . . . as *such a war is probable and the danger of it remains*, the CPSU places before the USSR Armed Forces the task of all-around strengthening of combat readiness, utmost vigilance, mastery of all ways and means necessary for the decisive rout of the aggressor.³¹ (Emphasis added)

This assessment should not be cast aside because it is written by senior Soviet military officers. The authors are political officers, like Brezhnev and Ustinov, and, therefore, the assessment should be viewed as guidance from the communist party. This guidance is clearly to prepare for nuclear war.

In the case where strike preparations by the West have been detected, Soviet strategy merely confirms the obvious, that, *given* the war, it is best to strike first. However, this version of the concept does not go far enough. The Soviet approach is to prepare for war, and thus the important aspect of the strategy is its impact on capabilities and plans, which are designed for first strike if at all possible. This is also reflected in their correlation of forces model discussed above; it is basically a Soviet first-strike model.³² Further, the Soviet concept of "anticipating" the enemy is *not* simply detection of activities—it also involves prediction based on understanding enemy thought.

In assessing possible Soviet intentions of striking first, considerable attention should be placed on an underlying basic Soviet

concept of "seizing the strategic initiative," which has been analyzed by the Soviets as part of their study of the initial period of the war. A recent (1974) book, *The Initial Period of the War*,³³ a study of general trends that were characteristic of World War II that have not lost their importance today, concludes that the initial period is a relatively brief period in which all deployed forces participate to achieve immediate strategic goals. The concentration for the first strike by the attacking nation in World War II (Germany) is seen as having led to the creation of overwhelming superiority and to rapid penetration of the enemy's defenses to a great depth. The Germans are assessed as having devoted a great deal of attention to accomplishing this *unexpected* first strike. A major conclusion of the book is that *experience shows that it is extremely difficult to recapture the strategic initiative lost at the beginning of the war as a result of the surprise attack.*

These thoughts also characterize Soviet discussions of seizing the strategic initiative and of the initial period of the war in a modern, nuclear war context:

In view of the immense destructive force of nuclear weapons and the extremely limited time available to take effective counter-measures after an enemy launches its missiles, the launching of the first massed nuclear attack acquires decisive importance for achieving the objectives of war.³⁴

Considerable effort is directed to the problem of how a nuclear war might start, because of the importance of this start and the need to seize and maintain the strategic initiative. The notion of surprise is integral to the Soviet analysis of this problem. Surprise is critical to success in an all-out nuclear war, hence the importance of understanding the enemy's warning sensors and apparatus and learning how to counter, confuse, or disable this capability, as indicated earlier. Also as indicated earlier, the Soviets clearly recognize the value of a short war and the fact that this objective would be more achievable if the United States were caught by surprise or unprepared.

In their literature, the Soviets have, since the mid-sixties, seen two ways in which all-out nuclear war could begin: by surprise attack and by escalation during a local conflict. In both cases,

interesting examples worthy of considerable thought are present in the Soviet military literature. Consider first, the local—and here, conventional—war:

Speaking of the surprise unleashing of a nuclear war, the following should be noted. Recently the command element of the U.S. army, evidently, does not exclude the possibility of opening military operations even in the main theaters with the use of just conventional means of destruction. Such a beginning of war can create favorable conditions for the movement of all nuclear forces to the regions of combat operations, bringing them into the highest level of combat readiness, and subsequently inflicting the first nuclear strike with the employment in it of the maximum number of missile launch sites, submarines, and aircraft at the most favorable moment.³⁵

One of the advantages that the Soviets see in a conventional phase is the possibility that it provides to cover preparations to initiate a nuclear attack, preparations that might otherwise be detected and provide warning. The notion of striking at “the most favorable moment” included in this quote is often encountered in the Soviet military literature, especially in regard to surprise attack.

Second, consider a surprise attack developing from a crisis. Should the Soviets reach a decision to go to war, their view appears to be that it would be greatly to their benefit to achieve the maximum surprise. One manner in which this could come about can easily be attached to a deep crisis. During such a crisis it might become clear to the Soviets, for example, that war with the United States had become “inevitable.”³⁶ Rather than launch in the middle of such a crisis, when presumably U.S. forces would be at a maximum state of alert and the president most likely to issue a command to respond, they could conclude that a better course of action would be to deliberately de-escalate the crisis, concede in a deliberately deceptive manner to the U.S. demands, and then strike after the crisis had subsided. The benefits of such an approach are twofold; not only does this approach enhance surprise, but, additionally, it activates the strike at a time when the combat readiness of U.S. forces would be minimal (that is, at the conclusion of an alert state when people are tired, spare parts and other supplies [e.g., fuel] are low, and

systems are in need of servicing). That the Soviets have thought conceptually about such a scenario is clear from two 1968 *Voyennaya mysl'* articles:

It must be noted, however, that an aggravation of the international situation by aggressive imperialist circles on the eve of the war is not obligatory. On the contrary, for the purpose of disinformation and deceiving public opinion, they might resort to a false softening of relations and, under cover of this maneuver, suddenly unleash a war.³⁷

Of course, international tension is always a threat to peace. However, the imperialists are capable of the following maneuver: intentionally alleviating and improving relations with the socialist countries in order to lull their vigilance and utilize this moment for the sudden unleashing of a world war. Hence combat readiness must be maintained constantly, every day, both in conditions of aggravation of international tension, and in the process of its alleviation.³⁸

Such an approach might well make use of various peace initiatives, as discussed earlier, as a cover for final preparations for a massive attack. Such an effort is not inconceivable. It is illuminating to recall that the Soviets terminated the war with Finland in 1940 with a massive "surprise" barrage, *after* a treaty had been negotiated but immediately *prior* to the time at which it was to become effective, i.e., at the "most favorable time." This is indicated in the following description of the end of the conflict shortly after the Red Army had broken through the Finnish front:

At noon on 14th March 1940 the armistice was signed, and all military operations had to cease.

Fighting along the front gradually died down, and it seemed that it would stop at any moment. But suddenly the commander of the front ordered intensive artillery fire from 11:45 a.m. until noon. All guns had to fire into the whole depth of the Finnish positions. In those fifteen minutes hell broke loose. One could only stand with open mouth and closed ears. The earth shook from the roar of the guns and the explosions of shells. During those fifteen minutes the Finnish troops, and also the population, suffered considerable losses. The Finns did not think anything like this could happen,

that such a surprise would be made during the last quarter of an hour, and they were already sending their troops back.

This action on the part of the Red Army was, of course, not only dishonest, but also inhuman. The order to reopen fire was incomprehensible not only to the Finns, but to us too, and when, after the war, Finnish officers asked why we did it, we could only shrug our shoulders.³⁹

What might thus appear to the United States as a surprise attack or, perhaps even more, a strike out of the blue, could perhaps be better understood as a major difference between U.S. and Soviet definitions of the "end of the crisis."

Based on the Soviet literature, we believe that the common Western perception that a surprise attack is the least likely of the unlikely possibilities is false. Although talking about a possible attack from the United States, the value in Soviet eyes of the readiness for and of concealing preparations for a surprise attack is clear from the following passage:

Imperialism is counting mainly at the present time on a sudden nuclear attack. A possibility of such an attack from the military-technical point of view depends on the availability to the United States of powerful strategic nuclear forces in a high degree of combat readiness.

This permits the enemy, in effect, to inflict at any moment simultaneously a powerful strike against the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries. The preliminary carrying out of any vast preparatory measures is not required for this. Therefore, the task of concealing the direct preparation for a sudden nuclear attack with the use of nuclear means is especially important.⁴⁰

In assessing Soviet statements that can be interpreted as referring to first-strike "intentions," it is important to inquire into the motivations of the individual Soviet spokesman as well as into the subject matter itself. In addressing Western audiences, Soviet leaders such as Brezhnev are striving to achieve a certain effect, i.e., to influence Western perceptions of the Soviet Union. An obvious Soviet tactic employed in the pursuit of superiority is that of encouraging the West not to develop its own capability. For

this and also to assist the Soviet Union in further expanding its own military technical and scientific base via trade and technology transfer, a Western perception of a nonhostile Soviet Union is important.

At the same time, however, statements on the need to prevent nuclear war, on the importance of peaceful coexistence, and on rejecting first-strike concepts are not misleading to senior Soviet military and party officials. First, such officials are familiar with Soviet propaganda and deception practices. It is a way of life with them.⁴¹ They understand what is happening. Second, many of the statements are true if one is careful not to impute Western connotations to words that are critical in such Soviet statements—words such as “prevent” and “peaceful coexistence.” The meanings of these words in the Soviet Union are very different from their meanings in the West. Third, Soviet statements both explicitly and implicitly often refer to U.S. concepts. This needs to be recognized, and such statements should not be confused with Soviet statements about their own concepts. Most open-source statements that deprecate military strategy are directed at U.S. or other bourgeois strategies. A good example of this is the Trofimenko article, in which Brezhnev is quoted as opposing first-strike concepts. The concept actually opposed in this article appears to be the U.S. concept advocated many years ago by several Western strategists that the Soviet nuclear capability be destroyed before it developed into a mature force.⁴² *It has nothing to do with Soviet views on striking first when the situation calls for war.* The preponderant base of evidence in the Soviet literature designed for internal use calls for their striking first against the West with maximum surprise when the situation calls for war and when the factors are in the Soviet favor. The Soviets state that any aggressor

risks unleashing a nuclear war only with confidence of achieving victory. And confidence in the success of a nuclear attack can occur in conditions whereby there is a sufficiently high guarantee that nuclear strikes will be delivered to the objectives of destruction, that a mass launch of ballistic missiles and takeoff of aircraft will occur for a relatively long time undetected by the country against which the attack is being carried out, and that the armed forces,

and above all the strategic nuclear means of the enemy, will suffer such destruction that they will be incapable of carrying out a powerful retaliatory nuclear strike.⁴³

Developing the capability for this variant—the preferred variant—for global nuclear war appears to be a primary goal of the Soviet economic, political, and military programs.

Therefore, although an attack out of the blue is often regarded in the United States as a “worst-case” fantasy and not “worth spending much money on”⁴⁴ and although it may be impossible—by definition—to conclusively support the idea that anyone, including the Soviets, would deliberately start a global nuclear war, the converse, i.e., that they *would not* strike first, is extremely difficult to consider valid in the absence of an enormous change in the foundation of their underlying military thought—laws, principles, tactics, strategy, and doctrine.

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Index

- Active targets, 17, 47
- Air defense, 43
- Africa, xiv
- Albright, Joseph, 81
- Altunin, A. T., 70
- Andropov, Y., x, 25
- Anureyev, I. I., 95
- Assessments, objective, 11
- Augmentation, 60
- Automation, 95

- Barbarossa, 35
- Battle management, 52
- Bettelheim, B., xiii
- Biryuzov, S. S., 35, 59
- BMEWS, 79
- Brezhnev, L. I., 1, 5, 55, 72, 90, 105, 106

- Capitalism, destruction of, 30
- Capture, 97
- Carter, J., xi
- Central Intelligence Agency, 71, 96fn
- Central rear services, 63
- Central supply, 63
- Centralized control, 73
- Chemical industry, 84
- China, 13, 30
- Chuikov, V. I., 67
- Churchill, W., xiv
- CIA, 71, 96n

- Civil defense, 18, 67, 71
- Civilian, 90
- Coalition war, 2, 14
- Combat operations, 24
- Combat readiness, 35
- Command/control, 76; battle management, 52; cybernetics, 95; flexibility, 52, 73; foresight, 92
- Communications, 81
- Compromise, 20
- Concealment, 61
- Control, 22; centralized, 73
- Coordination, 74
- Correlation of forces, ix, 11, 47, 51, 57, 64, 90, 93, 97, 101
- Counterforce, 15
- Countervalue, 15
- Cover, 43, 104
- Cover and deception, 41
- Covert actions, 26
- Covert communications links, 80
- Covert deception, 45
- Covert mobilization, 37
- Criteria, 96
- Critical branches, 84
- Cuban missile crisis, xiv, 12, 39, 41
- Cybernetics, military, 95
- Czechoslovakia (1968), 30, 37, 80

- Deception, 9, 41, 46, 103, 106; radio, 43
- Decision algorithm, 96

- Deep attack, 76
- Defeat, 78; final, 22; total, 14
- Defense, civil, 18, 67, 71
- Destruction of capitalism, 30
- Diplomatic efforts, 39
- Disinformation, 39, 87
- Disorganize, 18, 81
- Dispersal, 45, 69
- Disruption, 18, 78, 80, 81
- Diversions, 82
- Dummy targets, 44

- Echelon, first strategic, 46, 58;
 - second, 61; second strategic, 58;
 - third strategic, 58
- Economics, military, 68
- Electric power, 82, 84
- Electromagnetic interference, 49
- Electromagnetic pulse, 49
- Erickson, John, ix, 65
- Escalation, 32, 101, 103
- Europe, 22

- Final defeat, 22
- Final victory, 19, 60
- Finland (1940), 104
- First strategic echelon, 46, 58
- First strike, 1, 3, 98, 100, 101
- Five Year Plan (1966–1970), 69
- Flexibility, 52, 73
- Force development, 6
- Foreign assistance, 28
- Foresight, 92
- Forestalling, 9, 98

- Germany, xiii, 27
- General staff, 72, 88
- Global nuclear war, 8
- Goals, 16, 17, 27, 92; strategic 59, 102
- Goure, Leon, ix
- Gray, C., ix
- Great Patriotic War, 25, 30
- Ground troops, 20
- Group strikes, 74
- Gulag, 28

- Haselkorn, A., ix
- Hawks, 25
- High altitude nuclear explosions, 78
- Hughes, H. Stuart, 41
- Hungary (1956), 30

- Ideological struggle, 43
- Ideology, 22, 31, 42
- Immediate strategic goals, 102
- Imperialism, stronghold, 23
- Industry, chemical, 84; dispersal, 70
- Initial period of the war, 15, 27, 34, 46, 59, 73, 85, 102
- Initial strategic mission, 15
- Initiative, 73, 92
- Intelligence, 81; military, 28
- Internal police, 28
- Invasion, 30

- Japan, 27

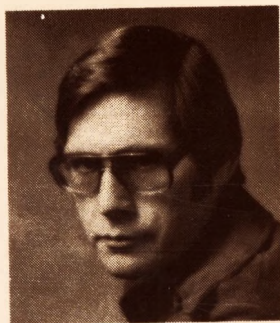
- Kennedy, J. F., xiv, 12, 41
- Kennedy, R. F., 41
- KGB, x, 4n, 25, 91
- Khrushchev, 12, 41
- Kohler, F., ix
- Kupperman, C., ix

- Launch on warning, 48, 77
- Laws of war, 12
- Leadership, 11; military-political, 97;
 - strategic, 73, 89

- Malinovskiy, R. Ya., 100
- Management, battle, 52
- Manchurian campaign, 80
- Maneuver, 43, 68
- Middle East, 30
- Military cybernetics, 95
- Military doctrine, 22
- Military economics, 68
- Military-economic targets, 17
- Military intelligence, 28
- Military strategy, main missions, 7
- Military-political leadership, 97
- Military potential, 16, 27

- Military science, 11, 68
- Military strategy, 8, 90
- Military-technical superiority, 55, 62
- Minuteman, 76
- Missile exchanges, 2, 20, 23, 48, 62, 93, 97
- Missions, main strategic, 7
- Mobilization, 13, 58, 61, 63; covert, 37
- Moral-political, 27
- Most favorable moment, 103
- National intelligence estimate, xii
- NATO, 24
- NKVD, 29
- Nuclear war: as a continuation of politics, 7; avoiding, 10; battle management, 52; continuation of politics, 10; danger, 8; global, 8; victory, 10
- Occupation, 15, 22, 97
- Occupation and control, 3, 24, 31, 80
- Offutt AFB, 81
- Oil, 21, 84
- Oil refineries, 85
- Operations, combat, 24
- Pacifists, 42
- Packages, 74
- Passive targets, 17
- Pauling, Linus, 41
- Peace initiatives, 41, 104
- Peaceful coexistence, 106
- Peacetime preparation, 15, 21
- Penkovskiy, O., 4fn
- Period of threat, 34
- Poland, 29
- Political, 89
- Political economy, 68
- Political objectives, 17
- Post-war settlement, 33
- Potential, military, 16, 27
- Power, electric, 82, 84
- Power systems, 16
- Preemption, 9, 36, 98
- Preventing, 9, 40, 98, 106
- Protracted war, 13
- Propaganda, 32
- PVO Strany, 43
- Radio deception, 43
- Rear services, 62
- Realists, 25, 28
- Recovery, 2, 21, 66, 67
- Reconstitution, 21, 66, 67
- Regions, 87
- Reserves, 23, 58
- Reserve ICBMs, 65
- Restraint, 79
- Resupply, 68
- Retargeting, 52
- Revolution, 42, 87, 98
- Roosevelt, F., xiv
- Rybkin, Ye., 32
- Sabotage, 80, 82
- SAC, 81
- Sacrifices, 17
- SALT II, vii
- Sanctuary, 20
- Science, military, 11, 68
- Second echelon, 61
- Second strategic echelon, 58
- Seizing the initiative, 3, 9, 18, 36, 102
- Seizure, 19, 21, 31, 83
- Sequence, 86
- Sequence of strikes, 48
- Serov, 29
- Single plan, 73, 74
- SLBM, 76
- Social progress, 98
- Socialism, 32
- Sokolovskiy, V. D., 54, 61
- Stalin, J., xi, 28, 72
- State Committee of Defense, 66, 72
- State Planning Commission, 69
- Stavka, 72
- Strategic aim, 16, 27
- Strategic decision, 96
- Strategic echelons, 58

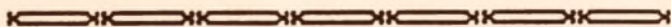
- Strategic factors, 70
- Strategic goals: immediate, 59, 102; short term, 46, 59
- Strategic leadership, 73, 89
- Strategic maneuver, 52
- Strategic missile forces, 58, 74
- Strategic missions, 75; initial, 15
- Strategic objectives, 17
- Strategic planning, 30, 54
- Strategic reconnaissance, 51, 77
- Strategic regions, 86
- Strategic reserves, 60
- Strategy, military, 8, 90
- Struggle, ideological, 43
- Student Peace Union, 41
- Subversion, 25, 87
- Sullivan, 65
- Superiority, 1, 3, 33, 35, 46, 55, 66, 90, 97, 98, 102; military-technical, 55, 62
- Supreme High Command, 59, 72
- Surprise, 3, 9, 11, 12, 18, 35, 44, 45, 61, 79, 80, 99, 100, 102, 105
- Target categories, 75
- Targeting, 75
- Targeting strategy, 15
- Targets, 88; active, 17, 47; dummy, 44; military-economic, 17; passive, 17; time sensitive, 77
- Teheran, 28
- Third strategic echelons, 58
- Thomas, Norman, 41
- Tokyo, 27, 81
- Total defeat, 14, 24
- Total victory, 24
- Transition to nuclear war, 103
- Trofimenko, 1, 106
- United Nations, 41
- Ustinov, D., 90
- Verification, 65
- Victory, 10, 12, 14, 28, 32, 57, 62, 66, 90, 95, 99, 106, 107; final, 19, 60
- Voyennaya mysl', viii, 4, 72
- Vulnerable points, 84
- War: as a continuation of politics, 7; avoiding, 10; class, 12; coalition, 2; continuation of politics, 22; global, 8; Great Patriotic, 25, 30; initial period, 15, 27, 34, 46, 59, 73, 85, 102; laws of, 12; preventing, 9, 40, 98, 106; protracted, 12, 13; short, 13
- War aims, 92
- War management, 11
- War survival, 3, 11, 99
- War termination, 31
- Warning, 77, 81; launch on, 48, 77
- Western strategists, 1
- World War II, 27
- Yepishev, 55
- Zav'yalov, 100n



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What the experts say:

Soviet Strategy for Nuclear War is a sound and extremely useful survey of Soviet opinion on a crucial subject; it ought to make an impact on Congressmen and their staffs studying the SALT problem and the balance of U.S.-Soviet military force.

Dr. Ray S. Cline

Center for Strategic and International Studies

It is particularly timely that there is now being made available to the public, this excellent analysis of what Soviet students of military nuclear strategy and tactics have actually been saying and writing on the subject for internal debate, enlightenment and guidance within the USSR. It opens one's eyes.

The Honorable Paul H. Nitze

former deputy secretary of defense

The study shows . . . incontrovertibly, that the Soviet military treat prospect of strategic war with the United States seriously, and they are developing what is known as a "war-fighting" and "war-winning" strategy for it. This evidence, of course, has considerable bearing on our own strategic posture in general, and on our approach to Soviet nuclear strategy in particular.

Professor Richard Pipes
Harvard University